Anatomy of a Cancer Town, by Rick Levine
The Supreme Court at Delphi • Transvestites

AUGUST 7, 1978 $1.00
THE FEATURE NEWS MAGAZINE

New Times®

Why America Can't Give Up Hope

by Peter W. Kaplan

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9 OUT OF EVERY 10,000 AMERICANS PREFER CAMPARI

Compared with Europeans, Americans are meager consumers of Campari & Soda.
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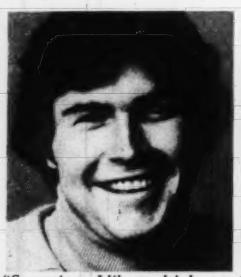
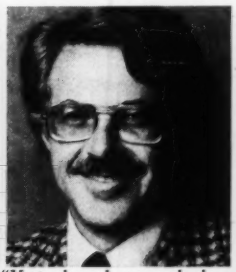


"Sometimes I like to drink Campari with soda. Other times I like it with tonic. But mostly, I like to drink Campari with Melissa."
—Steve Gibson, San Fran.

"I still haven't gotten Fred to drink Campari. But I'm hopeful. After all, last month I got him to give up suspenders."
—Joan Gringer, N.Y.C.

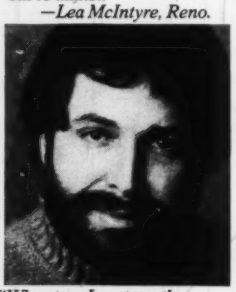


"Yesterday, when everybody ordered cocktails, I said, 'Campari' instead of what I usually say ('Martini'). I found it improved my articulation."
—Mort Goldstein, Boston.

"A Campari & Soda prepares my palate for a good meal. After I finish the drink, I go to bed, and my palate goes out to dinner."
—Lea McIntyre, Reno.

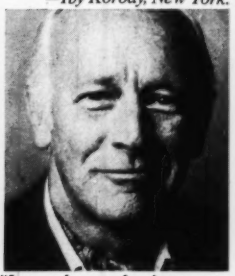
"With a lot of soda, Campari is a perfect before-dinner drink. With a little soda, it's a great cocktail. With nothing at all, it's in a glass by itself."
—Jeff Landis, Atlanta.

"I allow myself one drink before dinner. Since I discovered Campari & Soda, I've been eating six dinners a day."
—Iby Korody, New York.



"Whenever I spot another Campari drinker I always honk my horn and wave."
—John Gray, Seattle.

"I first tried Campari on the Via Veneto in Rome and didn't care for it. But that was before I met Marcello."
—Greta Westfall, L.A.



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—James Barker, Wash., D.C.

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NewTimes

VOLUME II NUMBER 3

AUGUST 7, 1978

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Hey well here we are, doing Bob "national landmark" Hope. You know Hope really did ask to be made a landmark. It wasn't the honor he wanted—it was the tax-free status. Talk about rich—Hope's the only guy in America who can threaten to *secede*. And *land*—he's got so much, they could solve the whole Mideast problem by putting the Palestinians in the *west* end of Hope's property and the Israelis in the *east* end. Not only would they never see each other, they'd be in different time zones. But I love Hope's joke vault—more locks than Farrah Fawcett. Letting Milton Berle in there'd be like giving Dean Martin the key to the Seagram's Building. But that Hope's something else, I wanna tellya. . .
by PETER W. KAPLAN

Cover photograph by John Ewing; photo artwork by Lane Berkwit.

20 Cancer Town

With a chemical industry that pumps 280 million pounds of waste into the air each year, and more cars per square mile than any other state, it's no surprise that New Jersey is the cancer capital of America. And, with 10 times the normal number of leukemia cases among children, the northern suburb of Rutherford is becoming the cancer capital of New Jersey.
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The recent *Bakke* ruling was merely the latest example of a Supreme Court that can't seem to make up its collective mind. But the results of the Court's indecision have been less catastrophic than the results of some of its decisions, and ambiguity may well be its greatest virtue.
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Long the inhabitants of sexuality's twilight zone, transvestites are slowly coming out of the closet—dressed. But the movement is hardly a stampede. As one father of two admitted, "It's hard to be proud of being a male woman."
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– Stereo Review

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– Crawdaddy

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– Trouser Press

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– Rolling Stone

"A genuine rave."

– N.Y. Rocker

"An eminently enjoyable paean to the innocent joys of the music as we used to know it."

– Good Times

Every major rock publication agrees—he's pure pop and he's good.

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LETTERS

Panthers Pro and Con

Your article of July 10 entitled "The Party's Over" was most unsettling to me. Like many others, I applauded the Panther breakfast and school programs. I was and still am a proponent of armed resistance in the black community to ward off police brutality. I cannot, however, write in approval of the ghastly petty crimes which your article claims to have been perpetrated by a "band of squad members" directed by Huey Newton.

It is disheartening to have read your article and to naturally assume that what Huey has done and is doing with his squad is representative of the Panther movement as it exists today. Surely there are local chapters which still believe and carry out the lofty ideals which were the watchword of "the movement" as we knew it in the sixties and seventies.

Your article has done what most naive people have done. It has placed individuals with their tremendous egos as Christ-figures for any social, political or revolutionary movement. The movement is not Huey Newton, nor is he the movement. We must stop lauding particular people as the supreme leader, because they are human and they fail.

If what your article purports to be true is in fact true, then Huey will simply be a fallen victim of his own madness. And I along with many others will continue to fight for justice and against oppression without him.

Diane Howard
Bordentown, New Jersey

It seems as if the reactionary right is going all out through magazines like yours to discredit and destroy one of the most dynamic organizations ever.

To serve the cause of human rights: THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY IS NOT DEAD.

M. J.
Las Vegas, Nevada

I found your article on the Black Panthers very disheartening. It is upsetting to hear something like this after all the things the Panthers have done for black people. When reading the article, I found myself not wanting to believe it, mainly because the Panthers have accomplished so much good over the years. But what can I believe now that the facts are there. If the article is factual, then the Party is truly over!

Liz Davis
New York City

It was with disappointment that I read the article "The Party's Over" by Kate Coleman and Paul Avery. As a black student attending school in the late sixties and early seventies, Huey P. Newton was a source of pride, a totally committed black revolutionary who saw the value of working with equally committed whites. To read about his activities since that time in this article was disheartening. Once involved in helping the black community, he's now apparently ripping it off. I guess it's true that "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

Carr M. Williams
Brooklyn, New York

After reading your article on the Black Panther Party (July 10) I can no longer justify paying $1 to have one of the last great black leaders racially slandered. I am not contesting that any of the information you have gathered on Huey P. Newton is false. I am objecting to your lack of compassion. Being from Cleveland, Ohio, I have watched the press override the judicial system and convict a person before his trial (Sam Sheppard). The type of thought that has emanated from this article produces these homicidal tendencies in blacks.

There are many Huey P. Newton's in this country. We are violent and we are angry. Not only because of the last 400 years of bondage, but because of the last 100 years of so-called "freedom," and being caught in the middle of political "ping-pong."

Mark Dixon
Athens, Ohio

Fran's Fans

If Woody Allen were born a woman and totally lacked a sense of humor, he'd be Fran Lebowitz.

Allan Androsky
Kingston, Pennsylvania

You can tell Fran Lebowitz that the line she stole from Dorothy Parker was: "Sleep has all of the advantages of death and none of the disadvantages."

Emma Winters
Bristol, Connecticut

Since, in America, a lot of what is regarded as "self-indulgent and tacky" turns out to be Jewish, I was most interested in how a phenomenon like Fran Lebowitz and her book could come about. Would this article describe, I wondered, something other than just one more nervy hype, another clever Jewish person seeming to be original? It did not. But I enjoyed the piece anyway, laughed aloud three times, and predict Lebowitz will be an instant success . . . . ho hum.

Blair Merbs
Carmel, California

The Politics of Competence

Though I tend to share Robert Shrum's inclination to view Jerry Rafshoon's appointment as a pretty slimy commercial move, I think there just might be some benefits for us in Carter's new image campaign.

Many psych-promotion experts believe that reality has a way of catching up with image. According to the theory, if Rafshoon succeeds in making enough people believe that Carter is competent, Carter might start living up to that image.

Of course, if Carter manages to reach any level of competency, he might charge off very efficiently in a dangerous direction.

Amy Bellinger
St. Louis, Missouri

Addendum Erratum

The plural of "addendum" is "addenda." Similarly, the plural of "erratum" is "errata."

Ken Rosenzweig
Washington, D. C.

Indian Gift

Michael Parfit's "And the Skies Will Be Cloudy All Day" (May 15) scored a bull's-eye. Not only was the article excellent journalism, I believe it made a contribution out there in the real world. Within a week after your exposé hit the newsstands, Environmental Protection Agency district administrator Alan Merson denied the permit for the construction of two new power plants at Colstrip, Montana, which were expected to violate the pristine air standard the agency itself was charged with policing. Could it be that *New Times* helped him to some clear thinking?

Your story did, however, miss one important point. Much credit goes to Khris Olsen and his associates, the EPA scientists who faithfully gathered the data which proved the new units would indeed violate the clean-air standards established for the area.

Janet Muchovej
New York City

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DROP
DROP
BY DROP

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Medicine/by Mac Jeffery

DOES Rx SPELL RIP-OFF?

Throughout the first half of this century, the American Medical Association, the largest and most powerful medical organization in the world, battled relentlessly to rid the country of quack potions and cure-alls; and it is the AMA that is generally credited with being the single most powerful force behind the enactment of the early pure food and drug laws. Today, however, medicine's guardian seems to have done a complete about-face and become one of the pharmaceutical industry's staunchest allies—often at the public's peril and expense.

Item: In 1948, Parke-Davis introduced a powerful antibiotic called Chloromycetin, which was originally created to treat typhoid fever and other serious infections. Through intense and at times practically fraudulent promotion, however, Parke-Davis gradually built up their new product until it became one of the most popular prescription drugs of the sixties. And even though the nonchalant misuse of this drug was causing an alarming number of serious side effects and deaths, Chloromycetin was often prescribed for such minor ailments as colds, acne and hangnails.

By 1968, the situation was so serious that the Chloromycetin issue was brought before a Senate subcommittee chaired by Gaylord Nelson, who demanded to know what the American Medical Association was doing about the problem. The Association insisted that it had made extensive efforts to warn doctors of the drug's dangers; Senator Nelson angrily retorted that the AMA's journals carried large numbers of advertisements *promoting* the use of Chloromycetin, while the paltry collection of articles that the Association had published since 1961 on the dangers of the drug constituted an effort the senator described as "pitiful." Nelson went on to point out that the publicity of the committee hearings alone had done more to curb the reckless use of Chloromycetin in one year than the AMA had done in the previous seven.

While the use of the drug has dropped off massively since then, Chloromycetin is still on the market.

Item: During the late sixties, a dual-antibiotic, Panalba, also became quite popular. No deaths or serious side effects were ever linked to Panalba when used as prescribed, but many medical authorities began to question the value of such "fixed-ratio" combination drugs. In 1968, the esteemed National Academy of Sciences issued a report outlining the ineffectiveness of Panalba and related compounds. On the basis of this report—which the powerful *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* refused to publish—the Food and Drug Administration outlawed the drug in early 1970.

The AMA's role in this case began in 1961, when the concern about fixed-ratio drugs first began to attract national attention, and it publicly promised that all fixed-ratio drug advertisements would be phased out of its periodicals. By 1968 there was no evidence of any such move. More importantly, for the last 15 years the AMA has persistently called for the repeal of the FDA's authority to ban drugs, and in the case of Panalba, called for an investigation into the legality of the ban itself.

After mumbling quiet opposition to a number of hazardous drugs (while actually lending its support to ineffective ones),[4] the AMA openly joined forces late last year with the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (PMA) and the National Association of Retail Druggists to file a suit against the federal government over the latter's proposal to use, in Medicare and Medicaid programs, only *generic* drugs. (Generic drugs are chemically equivalent to, but less expensive than, brand-name drugs.)

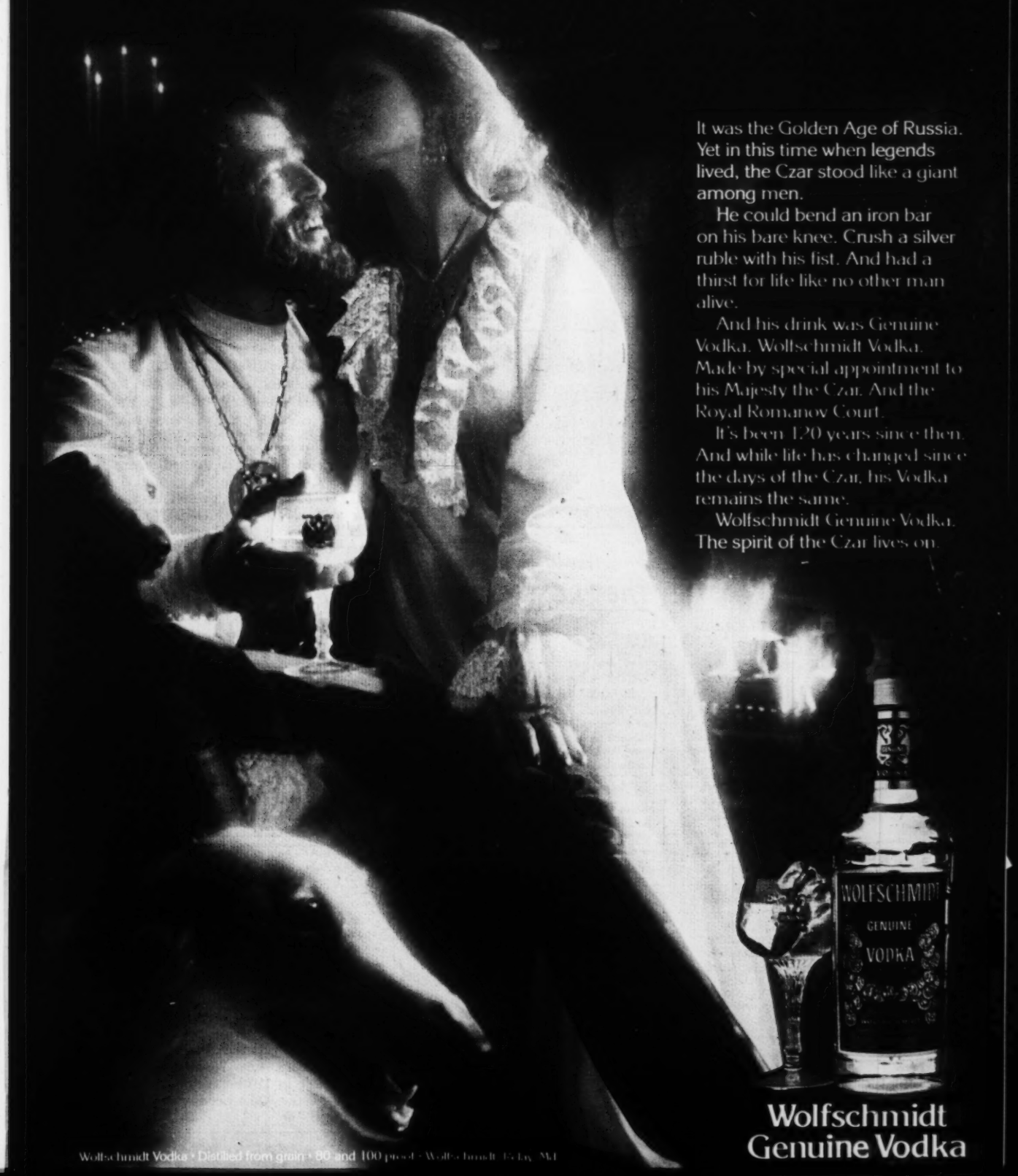
The reason for this unholy alliance between organized medicine and the drug industry is simple. For the last 20 years, the AMA's operating funds have relied heavily—some years by as much as 50 percent—on advertising revenues from its various medical journals, such as *JAMA*, and almost all of these ads are for prescription drugs. Although the AMA most likely adopted this parasitic relationship with the drug industry out of pressure, not choice, it is not enough to write it off as one of the vagaries of medical economics. It is the consumer who ultimately pays, and the reason lies in the very ads the AMA thrives on.

Doctors are just as susceptible to advertising as the rest of us. With the amount of new technology and drugs being developed each year, the only way a doctor can even try to keep abreast is by reading medical journals. Almost half of them consist of paid advertisements, and in the case of *JAMA*, most of the ads are for prescription drugs. Surveys have shown that such ads significantly influence a doctor's choice of prescription. For example, in a poll conducted in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, 50 percent of the doctors surveyed admitted that drug advertisements played a major role in their choice of prescriptions, and the figure rose to 80 percent in the case of well known brand names.

And yet the AMA simply cannot afford to turn down such advertising. Plagued with dwindling membership and only slowly recovering from the massive operating deficits it ran up in the early seventies, the Association's economic survival essentially depends on keeping the pharmaceutical industry happy. Recently, the Association's

Photograph by Marty Umans

The spirit of the Czar lives on.



It was the Golden Age of Russia. Yet in this time when legends lived, the Czar stood like a giant among men.

He could bend an iron bar on his bare knee. Crush a silver ruble with his fist. And had a thirst for life like no other man alive.

And his drink was Genuine Vodka. Wolfschmidt Vodka. Made by special appointment to his Majesty the Czar. And the Royal Romanov Court.

It's been 120 years since then. And while life has changed since the days of the Czar, his Vodka remains the same.

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Wolfschmidt Genuine Vodka

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allegiance to the drug companies has become more overt. During the early seventies, when the generic drug controversy was picking up steam, the AMA worked virtually hand in hand with the PMA to combat the generic threat, and there were a number of key lobbying figures shuttling back and forth between the two organizations. In 1971, the AMA voted to allow pharmaceutical industry executives to sit on its Scientific Activities Committee, the committee that determines which new drug findings are presented at the annual conventions. They need hardly have bothered. Drug executives had been full-time committee members for some time already.

Moreover, dissension within the Association is not tolerated. A widely respected AMA panel, the Council on Drugs, often antagonized pharmaceutical firms by openly criticizing ineffective and unsafe drugs, regardless of their advertising budget. The AMA responded by slashing the Council's budget, censoring its reports, and finally dissolving it altogether.

But how has this questionable alliance affected the consumer? A large number of doctors continued to prescribe Chloromycetin long after its dangers had been discovered, because the nation's largest medical journal published only muted warnings and carried dozens of ads extolling the drug, one of which—the AMA later admitted—was highly deceptive if not an outright fraud. The public continued to pay millions of dollars a year for the useless drug Panalba at least partially because, on two separate occasions, *JAMA* flatly and without explanation refused to carry major articles that might have enlightened doctors. And at the very same time, *JAMA* accepted two back-page advertisements for Panalba.

Today the Association's chief argument against generic drugs is that *only a doctor knows* precisely which drug the patient needs, and mandatory use of generics would interfere with the sacred doctor-patient relationship. Yet eight years ago, the AMA was defending the drug Chloromycetin, saying that it was dangerous only because so many doctors did *not* know how to properly prescribe it. And while it could be mere coincidence that the AMA's view on generic drugs just happens to be the same as the brand-name drug industry's, why is it, then, that no other major medical group in the country has the same opinion? Perhaps it is as Dr. John Adriani, a former AMA officer, told Senator Nelson's committee in 1973: "It boils down to this . . . the AMA needs every dollar it can get." ●

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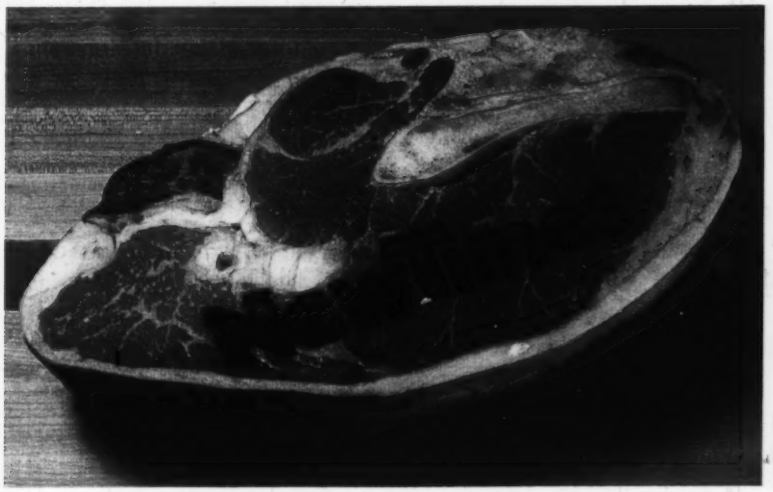


Crime/by Peter S. Greenberg

FUN WITH JOHN AND NATALIE

The story you're about to read is true. Only the names have been changed—36 times, to be exact. It all began in San Diego in December 1972. John Weimar, 27-year-old door-to-door encyclopedia salesman, was making the rounds when he saw a credit card lying face up on the sidewalk. He checked the expiration date and pocketed the card. After all, Christmas was coming.

When Weimar returned home that evening, he surprised his wife with several hundred dollars worth of gifts. Was Natalie Weimar shocked or outraged when she learned where they'd come from? Not exactly. John earned barely $10,000 a year and, as she later told authorities, she "felt so good having things."

Within a few days, John was again going door to door, only this time he went to every conceivable San Diego retail outlet and applied for credit cards in the fictitious name "James F. Grynde." When he started using this name, Weimar had no birth certificate, no back-up credit and no reliable references. He resorted to outright lying. On the applications, Grynde made himself a captain in the Marine Corps; his wife became an Avon lady. He also awarded himself a B.A. in political science from Columbia University. For references, he listed his parents, who supposedly resided in Philadelphia.

An avalanche of plastic soon arrived at the Gryndes' post office box: BankAmericard, Master Charge, American Airlines, Pan Am, TWA, National, Hertz, Avis, Saks Fifth Avenue, J.C. Penney and seven oil company credit cards. Within three short months, at least 56 cards were sent to the couple. As each new one arrived, the account number was used as a credit reference to apply for yet another card.

The scam was nearly infallible. The couple ate free, drove free and dressed free. When they needed to generate capital, they would charge merchandise at a local department store and then drive across town and sell it for cash.

By mid-1973, they had changed their names again. Grynde became Vernon Becker, then a series of Johns: Wilson, Warner, Davis, Taner. For a brief time, he became Edward Squirrel, then eight more Johns: Wiener, Winer, Winar, Wener, Wenier, Browning, D'Azur, Taner-West. And Natalie herself tried ten name variations.

Each time, they received more credit cards, and each card was issued on the basis of totally bogus information. (Weimar had never been in the Marine Corps, nor had he ever attended Columbia. The parents' Philadelphia "address" was a vacant lot.) Although their daily take from the credit cards was often in the hundreds, none of the companies seemed able—or willing—to stop them.

For the next five months it was Europe on no dollars a day

Then, after two years of scamming with dozens of low-limit "revolving credit" cards, the couple hit the jackpot: Not one, but two American Express cards arrived. Weimar took their advertising to heart—he never left home without them. He packed up his wife and off they flew for a whirlwind European spending spree.

Once there, Weimar used his TWA "Getaway" card to fly his mother-in-law over to join them. For the next five months, it was Europe on no dollars a day, renting the best cars, staying at $100-a-night hotels, and eating at the most expensive restaurants. They racked up more than $81,000 in European purchases.

Before their return to San Diego in 1976, the Weimars had changed their names again—to William and Doreen Bennett. This time John promoted himself to a major in the Marine Corps. Natalie (Doreen) claimed a degree from Fordham University in Queens, New York. (Fordham is in the Bronx.) And once again, the cards kept coming in.

Then, surprise of surprises—Grynde/Bennett received his first turn-down. After a three-and-a-half-year perfect record, Diners Club said no. Their refusal was based not on bad credit but rather on the number of inquiries on Grynde/Bennett's quickly expanding credit file.

Weimar was insulted. His pride was hurt. Two weeks later, he reapplied. On the second attempt, his income had miraculously increased from $12,000 to $18,000. He was rejected again. And again. And again. The company began to get curious *only* after the seventh application and routinely turned the case over to the post office.

San Diego postal inspector Bill Burgess first saw the Diners Club report in the summer of 1976. He checked with a dozen major credit card companies, and although none of them had previously contacted authorities, they all claimed to be looking for the mysterious Grynde/Bennett.

"We tried to follow them through their credit card purchases," Burgess reported, "but we were always three weeks behind."

Not surprisingly, no one knew where the couple was. On a hunch, Burgess ran a motor vehicle check and came up with drivers' licenses for the couple. He took his case to Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Lipman.

"You'll never find them," Lipman argued. "By the time we get our information, these jokers are always eight months ahead of us."

Six months later, during a slight drop in his work load, Lipman was able to take the case to a grand jury. They returned an 11-count indictment *in absentia*. The *San Diego Union* printed the story, along with the license photos.

At this point the Weimars were still in San Diego, but they had changed their names again—this time to D'Azur. And, since their return from Europe, Natalie had given birth to a baby girl. (Needless to say, the hospital delivery costs were charged—and the child's name had already been changed.)

The D'Azur's landlord recognized them from the story in the *Union* and called the San Diego police. When the officers arrived at the residence, neighbors told them that the couple had hurriedly packed their 14-month-old baby into their 1964 tan Chrysler.

The Weimars were headed south down State Highway 163, and they were apprehended a few miles north of the Mexican border. A preliminary search revealed a stack of blank credit card applications and a blue plastic

folder containing false identification papers for yet another alias—Michael Phillips. In another folder, incredibly enough, were pages of detailed listings of all their credit card purchases, rip-offs and cash profits.

The lists, written by John Weimar, seemed to include every phony credit charge over a five-year period, ranging from a $6 camera lens hood bought in Berlin to a $36 owl key ring purchased in Innsbruck to $3,500 worth of furniture charged at the Broadway department store in San Diego.

Weimar couldn't resist making some additional margin notes. On his hotel entries (30 in Europe alone) Weimar recorded that the Bristol Hotel in Naples was not a favorite ("in and out in an hour"), and he labeled the Penta Airport Motel in London "small" and "dirty."

"So far," said Lipman, "we can document better than $100,000 in fake charges." (Investigators at the Weimar house later found and seized 10 diamond rings, dozens of watches, more than 60 camera lenses, 25 leather coats, boxed suits, gold coins, rings, pendants and pearls.) Using Weimar's own calculations, the total is well above $200,000. Yet, none of the credit card companies has applied for restitution.

"This was one of the most outrageous frauds in San Diego history," Lipman claims. "But the significance of the case lies not in the fraud but in the attitude of the credit card companies. One would have to logically conclude that they have decided they're better off taking the losses than checking out the applications. Clearly in this case, no one did their homework."

At his sentencing hearing John Weimar seemed to agree. "It all started out as a joke," Weimar pleaded before U.S. District Court Judge Gordon Thompson, Jr. "Identities were fabricated and credit applications were sent to various companies to see if they would send credit cards.

"When the first companies sent credit cards, we thought of ending the joke right then and paying for the charges we'd made, but it seemed so easy. We continued because nobody ever said 'Stop.'"

Judge Thompson wasn't laughing. Both Weimars were sentenced to five-year prison terms. For her role in the crime, the mother-in-law, who was not indicted, was given the chore of babysitting for the child. But the beauty of the crime, if indeed there is one, is that the Weimars may not be forced to repay any of the companies. And, under current statutes, in 20 months the couple will be eligible to apply for parole—and, conceivably, some new credit cards. ●

ADDENDUM & ERRATUM

Good News For Huey. In our cover story "The Party's Over" (*NT*, 7/10/78/), Kate Coleman and Paul Avery reported on the recent activities of Black Panther leader Huey Newton, and on the criminal charges he faces. Now, some of those charges have been dropped. Last month, Judge Bill Kelsay in Santa Cruz County, California, dismissed assault charges against Newton and his bodyguard, Robert Heard, that stemmed from a barroom brawl on May 11. Kelsay said the alleged victim, a 26-year-old white man, was a "willing participant in this fray and engaged in much of the same type of bad action as anyone else involved." Heard still faces charges of illegal possession of a firearm, though, and in Alameda County, Newton is still being prosecuted on one count each of murder and assault, and two counts of illegal possession of a firearm.

ABC You In Court. If the people at Warner Cable Corp. have their way, ABC's wide world of sports will become a bit narrower. Warner, which owns the two-way Qube cable TV system ("Brave New World of Television"—*NT*, 7/24/78), has filed suit against ABC Television and the National Collegiate Athletic Association. The suit charges that the network and the NCAA last November prevented Warner from showing two Ohio State football games—which ABC did not intend to broadcast—to Qube's 20,000 subscribers in Columbus, Ohio.

ABC and the NCAA have a contract guaranteeing the network exclusive rights to televise college football games. Even though ABC covers only about 45 games a year (out of 2,300 NCAA contests), the network doesn't want anyone else getting the leftovers. Warner argues that showing the games would be a public service, and it has won the support of Ohio State, which would receive some of the profits. ABC officials, meanwhile, say that Warner is just trying to get a piece of the college football pie, hoping to set a precedent that would shatter the exclusivity agreement.

If ABC loses, there will be this minor consolation for network officials: Next time Ohio State coach Woody Hayes wants to shove a TV cameraman, it won't be one of theirs.

Wild Bill Rides Again. Last March, in his story "Wild Bill" (*NT*, 3/20/78), James Gleick profiled radical lawyer William Kunstler, for whom the 60s have never quite ended. Kunstler, Gleick wrote, is still careening around the country, flamboyantly defending leftists.

Now—shades of Judge Julius Hoffman!—Kunstler has been arrested in Raleigh, North Carolina, where he tried to serve legal papers on a judge in his own courtroom. (Kunstler's move was an attempt to have Joan Little's prison-escape trial moved to federal court. It didn't work.) Kunstler was charged with obstructing a criminal proceeding, but the matter was dropped because court was not in session when the incident occurred. Minutes after the arrest, Kunstler, who has been prohibited by the judge from participating in Little's defense, returned to the courtroom. He was a free man again, and the spectators greeted him with a round of applause.

Tables Turned. Richard Hongisto has a new job, thus confirming that in all human affairs there is a bizarre symmetry. Earlier this year, Dennis Kucinich ("Dennis, The Menacing Mayor of Cleveland"—*NT*, 5/1/78) fired Hongisto from his job as Cleveland's police chief. Apparently that didn't look too bad on the chief's résumé, because now Hongisto, a reformer with a maverick reputation, is the new Correction Commissioner of New York State. And Mayor Kucinich? He's fighting to keep *his* job, battling a recall move that started when he dumped—that's right—Richard Hongisto.

Mistaken Identity. Last issue, in a Special Report entitled "The Death of 'Crazy Billy' Sullivan," we ran a photo of the wrong man. The photo we printed (above left) shows William A. Sullivan, an FBI official who retired from the Bureau in 1975. But the former FBI official whose death our column probed is William C. Sullivan (above right).

Kicks Off 1980 Campaign
ABC during the All-Star Game):
'I read the sports page pretty carefully every morning and I also watch a few games on radio . . . uh . . . television. So it's kind of an avocation with me to keep up with batting averages, fielding averages, who won and who lost."

The Insider

House Assassination Committee to Cite Anti-Black Power Conspiracy

Sources close to the House Select Committee on Assassinations say that the federal probe will soon cite documentation of a conspiracy to "get" black leadership in America. The committee chairman, Louis Stokes (D.-Ohio), has already, in general terms, taken an appropriately affirmative stand. "They," he says, "are out to get black leadership all across the country. I think it is organized and follows a definite pattern. Most black elected officials have been subjected to every type of investigation you can possibly undergo because of their color," he said after learning that Charles C. Diggs (D.-Mich.) was indicted for payroll padding. The sources say the facts they've gathered on harassment will come out at public hearings to be held beginning on August 14.

"Black harassment will be no easy thing to prove," says one source close to the investigation. "But to insure credibility it must be laid out plain for everyone to understand who is doing what."

In the ten years since the late Rep. Adam Clayton Powell Jr. (D. N.Y.) was charged with misuse of federal funds, several of the present 16 black representatives have claimed harassment by the government. In 1975, Rep. Ralph H. Metcalfe (D-Ill.) was alleged to have received bribes and kickbacks but after an intensive multiagency investigation, the allegations were dropped. Charles Rangel (D.N.Y.) was the subject of a criminal investigation for income tax fraud; the charges were never brought.

Politics

Stokes (center): New evidence

"There is a national conspiracy to undermine and eliminate outspoken black leadership," says Congressman William Clay (D.-Mo.), whom the Department of Justice unsuccessfully tried to link with narcotics trafficking. Stokes says that he himself has been harassed, and privately suspects his office is bugged. In 1969, he and other black congressmen went to investigate the murders of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark in Chicago which he called "a shoot-in, not a shoot-out." His findings this time are likely to be as distinctive.

—Ira Rosen

South of the border patrol

Former CIA Head Colby Sees Peril In 60 Million Unborn Mexicans

Mexico is quickly replacing the Soviet Union as the favored objective of paranoia among top American intelligence officials. With as many as five million illegal Mexican citizens in this country and a burgeoning population in Mexico that, some analysts believe, could reach 120 million by the end of this century, the "brown peril" at our doorstep is causing fits for U.S. intelligence officials.

Building up for years (particularly in the face of recent large oil and gas discoveries in Mexico) have been concerns that a potent, growing Mexican nation could soon threaten U.S. security. Former CIA Director William Colby recently let the cat out of the bag when he told the *Los Angeles Times* his deepest fears: "You can not stop the [population] growth at this point," Colby said gravely. "The women are alive today who are going to bear those children. . . . What's going to happen to that extra 60-odd million Mexicans?"

Colby is one of those who are encouraging American policy makers to consider impoverished, developing nations like Mexico as "the greatest danger of violence and difficulty in the world." The theory has passed easily from the Ford to the Carter Administration, which already has worked up a National Security Council report on Mexico and the illegal alien problem.

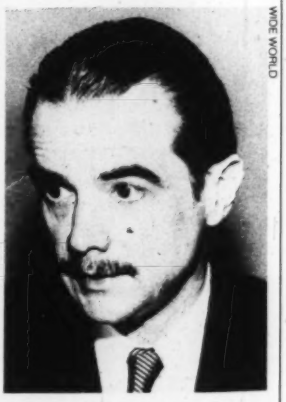
The report, a copy of which we have just obtained, suggests U.S. pressure on Mexico to reorient its rural role policies to promote small scale industrialization in order to stem the flow of Mexicans over the border. Not surprisingly, Mexican officials are deeply upset over the increasingly strident American obsession with the "brown peril." Asked for his reaction to statements like Colby's,

Colby: Seer

Mexican Counsul General Mario Tapia in Los Angeles was almost tongue-tied with anger. "It's a matter of politics," he finally blurted out, giving up trying to sound diplomatic. "Obviously I disagree completely with those sentiments." *—Joel Kotkin*

DEA Takes Hughes Heat

Interesting, But It Doesn't Explain His 7" Toenails



WIDE WORLD

The once deep friendship between the federal Drug Enforcement Administration and the Howard Hughes organization (INS.—July 24) is now breaking up over the federal narcotics agency's continuing probe into the question of who supplied "the goodies" allegedly shot up by the late reclusive billionaire. Sources close to top Hughes management are accusing DEA, which has already helped to indict three former Hughes aides on various drug-related charges, of launching a campaign of vilification against them through the media.

"They've been leaking a lot of information about poor old Howard and drugs across the country," fumed one former high-ranking Hughes aide. "They're talking their goddamn heads off about it. It's disgusting."

Of particular concern, the source told us, are rumors that DEA is going after drug indictments of former top Hughes aides Bill Gay and Chester Davis, former Summa Corporation president and chief counsel respectively. DEA, meanwhile, is acting hurt over the charges from their old friends at Hughes. Their pledge is to continue "to go after everything" concerning the case, according to a top narc spokesman.

—Joel Kotkin

US Continues Support for Funds Spent on Paraquat Sprayings

Despite public support for cutting off the portions of U.S. foreign aid that pay for paraquat spraying, the White House and the State Department are all for continuation of the funding. They are making the argument that the Mexicans are putting out $45 million of the $60 million program cost and that our $15 million provides leverage over the Mexican spraying policy. The State Department reportedly wants to encourage the Mexicans to add an ingredient to the paraquat that would make the marijuana smell or taste terrible, spray a less deadly substance, or abandon the spraying program altogether.

The Mexicans are deeply concerned with marijuana-as-a-threat and will continue to spray no matter what the U.S. says. They do not, however, care about heroin—which they regard as a gringo problem—and they'll stop spraying *that* if the U.S. cuts off paraquat assistance. Carter Administration advisers are claiming that the spraying has had a phenomenally beneficial effect in America—a 40 percent reduction in heroin overdose deaths. The mumblings from the State Department say that a cessation of the spraying would be tantamount to flooding the U.S. with heroin.

Dr. Peter Bourne, meanwhile, has a vast political interest in the paraquat question. His name was seriously soiled in the public examination of spraying policy, and he has quietly let it be known to a number of liberals that he supports the amendment cutting off paraquat funding because his stance is that the U.S. should not be involved in any way, shape or form. •

Gallup Said to View Carter as Irretrievable

Privately, George Gallup, the pollster, is saying that he believes that unlike Harry Truman, Jimmy Carter cannot recover politically. Gallup has told friends that he sees no intensely loyal or issue-oriented base, that Carter is now weak in foreign policy where he used to be comparatively strong, and that he's still as weak in domestic policy as he has been since the beginning of his Administration. Gallup said that in the exclusive information his organization has gathered, Henry Kissinger is commanding high ratings. And a trend recently noted in the press has also been showing up in Gallup numbers: the first signs of nostalgia for Richard Nixon as a president who knew how to handle foreign affairs—especially with the Russians and Chinese. •

Brutal Basic Training Kills Two 18-year Old Army Recruits

ANTHONY EDGEWORTH

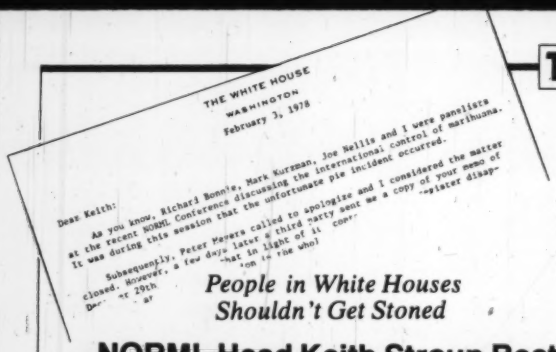
Army basic training is supposed to be tough. But when 18-year-old recruits Wayne Krassow and Lester Watts arrived at sweltering Fort Jackson in Columbia, South Carolina, on June 29 to begin six weeks of basic training, they were put through what the army has called "excessively strenuous and prolonged exercise." Hours later, they were dead.

What the army has not said is what really happened. In fact, spokesmen first refused to say anything at all, but then released conflicting stories. For example: They said the temperature was about 80°; it was actually over 90°. They first said the recruits hadn't exercised at all; they actually were put through at least 30 minutes of strenuous exercise. They first said neither recruit had any medical problems; Krassow actually fainted earlier in the day and wasn't treated. They first said the recruits were rushed to the base hospital; they actually had collapsed nearly an hour before. And for reasons no one can explain, Watts' parents were told he was alive after he had already died.

The army won't comment on the story from four recruits who witnessed the incident: Their drill sergeants forced them to run with heavy duffles, crawl in sand, do 100 jumping jacks and other calisthenics for 30-40 minutes as punishment for being slow. They said one sergeant kicked Krassow after he collapsed and made the other recruits drag, not carry, him into the barracks.

The army denies a coverup and has charged two drill sergeants with involuntary manslaughter, dereliction of duty and maltreatment. Senator John Glenn (D.Ohio) and Senator Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.) are investigating, and Representative Delbert Latta (R-Ohio) has had a request granted for a House Armed Services Committee investigation. Melvin Belli says he will ask Congress for damages for the families. Says an aide of the base commander, "I don't know of any conflicting stories."

—Bob Drogin



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
February 3, 1978

Dear Keith:

As you know, Richard Bonnie, Mark Kurzman, Joe Nellis and I were panelists at the recent NORML Conference discussing the international control of marihuana. It was during this session that the unfortunate pie incident occurred.

Subsequently, Peter Peyera called to apologize and I considered the matter closed. However, a few days later a third party sent me a copy of your memo of Dec[illegible]re 29th [illegible]ar[illegible]ster disap[illegible]ton in the whol[illegible]

People in White Houses Shouldn't Get Stoned

NORML Head Keith Stroup Beats Administration Threat Effort

When the White House changes a public reprimand into a commendation, the violent reversal means something fishy's gone on. Over the past eight months, the relations between the Administration and the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) have been strained. The tension started with a thrown pie and ended with a rumble between NORML's head, Keith Stroup, and Carter's special assistant for health issues, Dr. Peter Bourne.

Last December, Yippie pie-assassin Aaron Kaye hurled a lemon meringue at Joe Nellis, chief counsel of the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, during NORML's annual conference.

When the cream cleared, Marc Kurzman, the conference chairperson, leaped to the microphone. He denounced Stroup as the mastermind behind the pie plot. Hounded by NORML sponsors (including representatives of Hugh Hefner, and Max Palevsky), Stroup issued a memorandum to the NORML National Policy Committee confessing he'd lightheartedly suggested the meringueicide, but insisting he'd tried to stop Kaye at the last minute.

No matter: An overzealous White House aide seated next to Nellis had taken offense at being splattered and fired off an intimidating February 3, 1978, letter to Stroup on White House stationery. The aide, Bob Angarola, White House general counsel to the Office of Drug Abuse Policy, stated he was "upset" at the "unfortunate pie incident," adding ominously: "I must register disappointment at your participation. . . . This can only prove counterproductive to your and NORML's most worthwhile efforts . . . it will inevitably have a negative impact." He ended with an implied threat: "I sincerely hope that it will not seriously affect your future activities, and that NORML will be able to maintain support and continue the fine work it has done in the past." The message was clear.

Stroup, no newcomer to hardball, was "livid" because the letter was copied to at least one member of the NORML advisory board, Wesley Pomeroy (he's since quit the board and joined Dr. Bourne's staff) and because it somehow reached the hands of others. "I don't get a report card from those turkeys," Stroup said. Angarola, a leftover from the hardline Nixon drug office, seemed to have purposely jeopardized NORML's fund-raising capabilities with methods that would have made his old boss happy. "This is the most heat I've felt in eight years running NORML," Stroup said. "I had to go around the country explaining this."

Marc Kurzman, meanwhile, had been suggesting to NORML supporters that the time had come for a change in leadership—and that he had a better rapport with his friends in the White House than did Stroup. Putting the whole picture together, an outraged Stroup called Angarola's boss, Dr. Peter Bourne, a friend of Stroup's, demanding "an explanation and an apology." Privately, Stroup points out, "If people wonder why we have a Nixonian drug policy, just tell them to look at who's staffing the White House Office of Drug Abuse Policy."

To stress to Bourne that the Angarola matter was of mutual concern, Stroup had a dark suggestion of his own, telling Bourne aides to pass on to their boss a threat as dangerous to Bourne as Kurzman's had been to Stroup: He implied that he might know too much about the recreational drug preferences of certain senior White House aides; he suggested that those preferences could end up in the newspapers. "Isn't that blackmail?" one White House aide asked appropriately. Whatever it was, it hit its mark: Bourne assured Stroup he would discuss the matter with Angarola, denying that he'd ever seen the offending letter.

Stroup's next stop was to send a chastising letter to Angarola: "At the end of this decade, were one to look back and analyze our mistakes in an objective fashion, which do you think would be seen as the greater mistake my involvement in the pie-throwing incident at the NORML conference or your involvement in, and support for, a program that resulted in the paraquat-contaminated marijuana being smoked by young people in the United States? I would hope that your sense of outrage could be redirected."

It hit home. Another White House letter was on the way, dated February 11, 1978. Suddenly Dr. Bourne wanted Stroup to know "of the very high personal regard in which I hold you . . . and the remarkable leadership that you have provided to NORML . . ." Neither did Angarola seem to carry his bile any further. "It is such a minor incident," he told us. "I'd just like to forget it. I just wanted to make sure NORML's credibility was maintained."

"Bullshit," Stroup insisted. "The White House was anxious to get rid of me. Apparently they wanted someone more controllable. I think they wanted Marc Kurzman to run NORML." Kurzman modestly acknowledges this: "A cross-section of people thought a change of leadership would be good." But Stroup used his ammunition well (and his intimacy with D.C. drug habits) and managed to hold his ground. With a strong hand, he made sure that Peter Bourne and the White House—as the special assistant to the President wrote him—would "look forward to continuing to work closely with you in the future." —*Dan Brewster and Al Brewer*

Filling big shoes

Hispanic Nixon Disciple Seeks to Regain Summit

Richard Nixon must be proud. One of his staunchest defenders, former Hispanic finance chairman of the Finance Committee to Re-elect the President, Ben Fernandez, has made it clear that he is ready to run for the 1980 Republican Presidential nomination, bringing some of the more unrepentant old Nixon boys back together for a little fun.

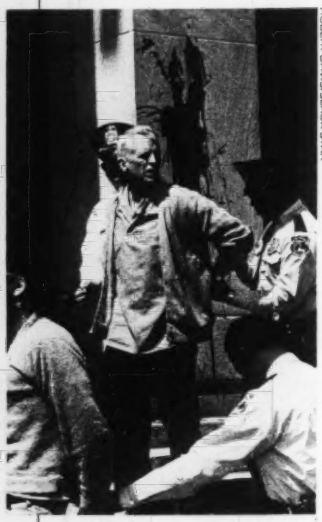
Republican National Executive Committee member Fernandez, a dapper, 53-year-old Los Angeles economist, claims to have raised over $800,000 in pledges for his Presidential Campaign Committee, a Hispanic group seeking to nominate a brown GOP standard bearer, most likely Fernandez himself. For tips on campaign financing, Fernandez has been taking lessons from the old pro himself, former head of finance CREEP, Maurice Stans. Uncle Maurice, still declining to reenter the political wars openly, says he's serving as a "source of information" for Fernandez, whom Stans describes as a "friend" and "a pretty dynamic guy." Republican National Committee chairman, Bill Brock, and the rest of the National Committee crew, still swabbing the messy decks left over by Stans, Fernandez and the rest of the old gang, are less than thrilled by this brazen Nixonian revival. "Ben Fernandez," sneers one clearly embarrassed RNC staffer, "doesn't even have the brains he was born with." —*Joel Kotkin*

Defy mediocrity.

The Insider

Abstract expressionist

Berrigan Back In Jail After Spilling Buckets of Blood



ROBERT DAVIS/BLACK STAR

Berrigan: Unspackled

Long-time political activist Philip Berrigan is in prison again, this time serving six months at Allenwood Federal Prison Camp in Pennsylvania for his graphic protest of the build-up of nuclear weaponry.

The former priest and about 40 others staged a "die-in" at the Pentagon during Holy Week last spring, scattering ashes and buckets of blood on the entranceways—"to offer a reminder of what nuclear war is going to look like," according to Berrigan.

Berrigan, who was one of the Catonsville 9, the celebrated war resistance group that destroyed Maryland draft records in 1968, has been arrested 17 times in the last three years as a result of campaigning against the nuclear arms race. He was arrested 23 times prior to 1975 for war resistance actions. Berrigan last served a prison term (three months) in the spring of 1977.

"Fighting nuclear powers is a matter of survival for this planet," said Berrigan in a telephone interview from the prison. "If the arms race continues at the present rate, there will be a nuclear war within 25 years. We are living on borrowed time."

Several of Berrigan's friends were arrested last week, also at the Pentagon, when, during a tour of the military complex, they drowned a full-scale model of the Cruise Missile ("the workhorse of the nuclear strike force") in blood.

"The Carter administration is getting vast mileage out of the trial of the Soviet dissidents," said Berrigan, "but Washington will not admit that there are many political prisoners in this country."

—Debra Weiner

Longet Prosecutor Has Book Thrown at Him

Tucker: Mr. Persecutor

Frank Tucker, the Aspen District Attorney who prosecuted Claudine Longet in the shooting death of her lover, Spider Sabich, has been found guilty of two counts of felony embezzlement. He resigned his post after the decision.

The controversial Republican office holder has been on the local hot seat ever since Longet was found guilty only of a misdemeanor shooting charge, and served thirty days. Irate residents noted that a series of prosecution bungles caused the judge to throw out what may have been the state's most damning evidence—Longet's diary and the alcohol content blood test administered to her after the shooting.

Later, when Sabich's parents tried to secure the diary in a civil suit, Tucker testified it had been taken in a burglary at his home. Shortly afterward, the *National Enquirer*, famous for its checkbook journalism, turned up with quotes from the diary.

Tucker, who was convicted of double-billing expenses, could be sentenced to up to ten years in jail and fined $30,000 on each of the two counts. He faces almost certain disbarment—plus two more trials. It has been alleged that he used public funds to pay for an abortion for his girl friend and used his position to buy office equipment from his own company with tax dollars.

Bespectacled Tucker claimed throughout the trial that he was being persecuted by political enemies. *—Ivan Goldman*

Rigid Scouting Officials Pull Wings Off Handicapped Eagles

When Edward Mattern retired, he wanted to lead a Boy Scout troop but his doctor told him he could no longer hike or camp out. Then he found a group of boys with similar limitations—muscular dystrophy victims in a Toms River, New Jersey, convalescence center.

The boys were confined to wheelchairs, so Mattern substituted oral tests for some of the physical merit badge requirements. By 1975, four of them had reached the point where they could apply for scouting's highest award, the Eagle badge. Scoutmaster Mattern attached a note to their applications saying the boys were crippled. He was shocked when the Boy Scouts of America turned all four of them down.

Mattern protested; the Boy Scouts investigated, compiling a 120-page report. The report concluded what the scoutmaster had first decided—that the boys could not pass physical tests. Two of the applicants died from complications of their disease during the debate.

In May, scout officials ruled to give the badge to Gregory Wittine, a Long Island youth who, at 23, was too old for the badge but had pushed his wheelchair and crawled to pass the hiking test. Officials, however, denied the badge to Mattern's troop members who were unable to crawl.

"We are adamant," said Thomas Allen, chairman of the Scouting Advancement Committee, "about not watering down the standards of excellence for the award." Scout officials, rigid to a man, didn't even accept Mattern's compromise proposal—a special Eagle-with-a-broken-wing award. The New Jersey State Senate passed a resolution urging them to reconsider; the national committee stood adamant. Mattern has vowed to fight them "until I'm dead." He may get some help. Lawyers from the New Jersey Department of the Public Advocate are now considering using a "very novel" approach to the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 in a discrimination lawsuit against the Boy Scouts. *—Michael Hoyt*

Proposition 14

Fame Makes the Sap Rise: Howard Jarvis Remembers a Few Things

That 75-year-old bull elephant, Howard Jarvis, is apparently beginning to feel like a pretty frisky little pup-on-the-road. Campaigning in Michigan for that state's Tisch Petition—another Proposition 13—Jarvis faced dozens of reporters, including Janis Settle of NBC affiliate WDIV-TV, Detroit. Howie, winking it up, took a liking to Janice Settle, and answered each of her questions in bumptiously sexist style, feeling it necessary to put his big old grizzled hand around her. Why, Settle asked him, did he come to Michigan? "Because the women here are so pretty," Jarvis said, recalling some hazy shapes from the past. Somebody had better get Estelle Jarvis on the phone and tell her to get that old dog back on the leash.

Sex and sex and sex and sex

Rolling Stones Played Backwards Are Still Dirty, But Legal

It's been almost 12 years since Mick Jagger sang "Let's Spend *Some Time* Together" on the *Ed Sullivan Show*, but the Rolling Stones are still posing problems for broadcasters, especially in light of the recent Supreme Court "Dirty Words" case. The title track of their current Number One album, *Some Girls* (NT, July 24), contains the line, "Black girls just wanna get fucked all night," a lyri not

Seventies

exactly designed for widespread airplay. But the song is too good to be kept off the air because of one little bad word, and several radio stations are finding ways to get around the problem.

George Taylor Morris, program director of WPIX-FM, New York's newest progressive rock station, has come up with a solution that even the Stones would approve of. "We took the word 'fucked' and played the tape backward in that spot," he explains. "Flipping that one word around doesn't detract from the song at all, and you still get the general idea of what he's talking about."

Indeed you do. Playing tape backwards often produces new sounds that are not necessarily predictable (who could have guessed that "Number nine, number nine" on the Beatles' white album would reverse to "Turn me on, dead man"?), and the results in this case are especially amusing—the "sanitized" line has Jagger singing, "Black girls just wanna get *humped* all night."

Says Morris: "That's no problem. 'Humped' isn't one of the Supreme Court's seven dirty words." •

Jagger: Black and blue

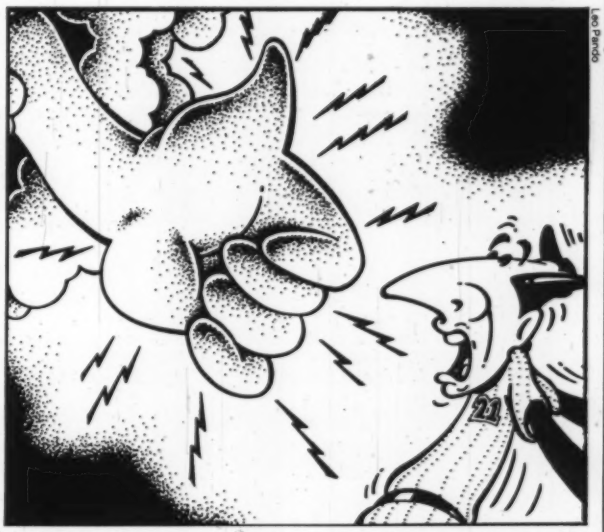
Angels in the outfield

Boise Ballclub Says Almighty's Filling Out Lineup Card

Last month, Brad Kramer of the Boise, Idaho, Buckskins, a Class "A" baseball club in the Northwest league, was cut from the team when the manager said he received orders from God that Kramer must go. Kramer explains that Buckskins field manager Gerry Craft met with him after the team suffered a 25-3 drubbing. He then said, "I was reading some verses in the Bible last night and God spoke to me and it was quite clear that there's just no room on the team for you."

Kramer questioned Craft's heavenly inspiration, and says he was *told* that the manager had confirmed the divine nature of the decision with Buckskin owner Lanny Moss, herself a born again Christain. Kramer says that when he protested his treatment, Craft told him, "This isn't Brad talking, it's Satan."

Kramer adds that his firing wasn't the first time that deities have been invoked in running the team. The Buckskins' stadium is graced with an illustration of Jesus in the outfield, and Kramer says that when the team would lose, the manager would often tell his players, "Jesus is just testing us."



Leo Pando

Kramer says that though he himself is no atheist, he can't blame the Buckskins' dismal five and twenty record on anybody else but the men. "I believe in God," he insists, "and I believe he has given me the talent to be a baseball player. But this is just ridiculous, because God is not going to take sides at a baseball game. They've just got some horseshit players on the team." —*Paul Grabowicz*

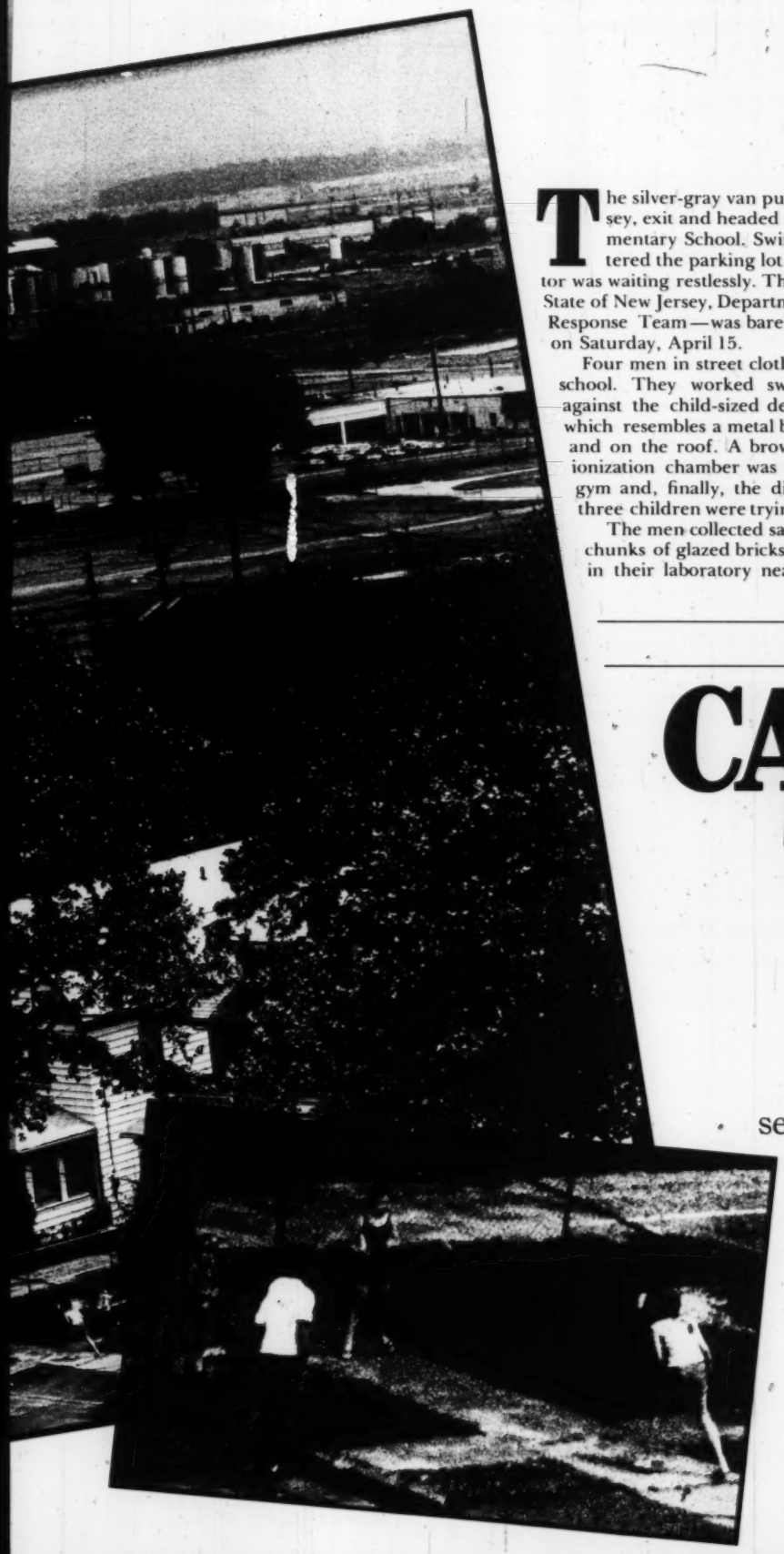
Army Says Nerve Gas Leaks Are Healthy as Vitamins

The army has 900 obsolete Weteye bombs on its hands at its Denver Rocky Mountain arsenal. Each bomb, if exploded, has enough gas to wipe out a good-sized city. And the army doesn't know how to get rid of them.

Army officials, until late June, had the splendid idea of storing them at Toole Army Depot, 60 miles southwest of Salt Lake City. That decision met some protest from Utah Governor Scott Matheson; government geologists say Toole Army Base sits near (calling Irwin Allen) an earthquake fault.

Nevertheless, the transfer was authorized in April and was scheduled to start the last week in June until the army found that three of the bombs were leaking. Though the army says that the leaks aren't dangerous, the transfer was called off pending an army investigation into the cause of the leaks.

Like Governor Mattheson of Utah, Governor Richard Lamm of Colorado wasn't anxious to have the gas of the army on his hands. He sent an officer of his health department to observe the Weteye inspection. The officer's assessment was one of care. "The people of Colorado," he said, "are best served by having the material removed from where it is or detoxified in place at the earliest possible date." And even if detoxification takes place fairly quickly, the prospects aren't pacifying. When the same procedure was performed two years ago on 21,155 cluster bombs containing nerve agent, several leakages and a serious explosion occurred. The end product of the detoxification is a highly toxic compound that has to be stored until an adequate means of disposal. —*Patricia Calhoun*



The silver-gray van pulled off Route 3 at the Rutherford, New Jersey, exit and headed north two long blocks to the Pierrepont Elementary School. Swinging around the tan brick building, it entered the parking lot and stopped near a rear door, where a janitor was waiting restlessly. The white lettering on the side of the vehicle—State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, Radiation Response Team—was barely visible in the dawn. It was just after 6 a.m. on Saturday, April 15.

Four men in street clothes carried equipment from the van into the school. They worked swiftly and silently, their bodies magnified against the child-sized desks and chairs. A high-volume air sampler, which resembles a metal bull horn, was activated in several classrooms and on the roof. A brown box-like instrument called a pressurized ionization chamber was carried to classrooms, the auditorium, the gym and, finally, the dirt playground behind the school. Nearby, three children were trying to launch a yellow kite.

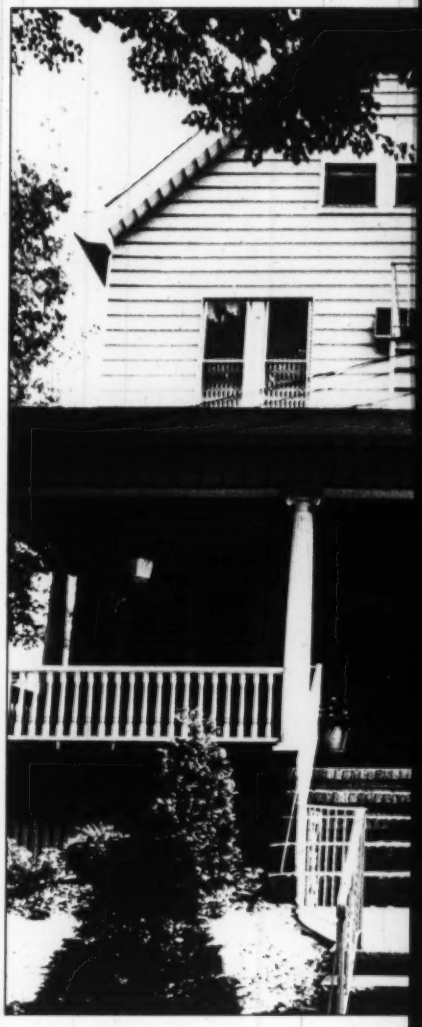
The men collected samples of milk from the school's kitchen and chunks of glazed bricks from the building itself for further analysis in their laboratory near Trenton. And before they departed late

NewTimes

CANCER TOWN

by Rick Levine

The Cleffis moved to Rutherford, New Jersey, in search of the suburban dream: backyards, good schools, an escape from industrial pollution. What they found instead was case after case of leukemia. And the first was that of their seven-year-old son



Suburban Dream: Vivian Cleffi thought her Rutherford home was above it all

that afternoon, they mounted 20 small black radiation sensors over the light fixtures in several classrooms, in the gym and on the roof, and hung a dozen more on telephone poles surrounding the school. The men would return to record the readings.

The tests by the Radiation Response Team were just the first phase of an unprecedented investigation. Five days later, two more groups of researchers visited the school. One group collected three water samples each from a drinking fountain, a restroom and the kitchen. The other dug six foot-deep holes in the playground and beneath some shrubs, gathering eight soil samples from each site. And on Monday, May 1, yet another group began three days of air monitoring at Pierrepont and two other Rutherford schools, taking 36 air samples at each site at various times of the day and night.

As these tests were going on, other investigators were collecting information on nearby industries and the substances with which they worked, analyzing weather records and studying traffic and highway patterns. In all, researchers from nearly a dozen local, state and federal agencies were turning the Pierrepont School and the peaceful neighborhood around it into perhaps the most intensely scrutinized 10 square blocks in the nation. Even so, they wondered whether they would ever understand what had happened.

First a five-year-old boy had been diagnosed with leukemia. Then an eight-year-old boy. Then a nine-year-old girl, an eleven-year-old boy, an eight-year-old girl and a seventeen-year-old girl. Six cases of leukemia where statistics indicated even one would have been too many. Two of the children had already died, and no one was sure the last case had been found.

In the cold language of their craft, scientists call this phenomenon a cluster. Relatively rare medical events, clusters have inspired great scientific curiosity and generated equally great frustration. But the Rutherford cluster is perhaps the most intriguing of all: This time, investigators suspect that several environmental factors may have played a role. And, as it turns out, there is no shortage of clues.

The Rutherford cluster would not have been discovered, much less investigated, had it not been for a 34-year-old housewife named Vivian Cleffi. She and her husband, Jim, moved to town seven years earlier in search of the typical suburban dream: backyards, trees, good schools for their children. What Vivian Cleffi found instead was a repeating nightmare—case after case of leukemia. And the first one she discovered was that of her son.

Posh in an earlier day, Rutherford is still a solidly middle-class town just eight commuter miles west of New York City.

Rick Levine is an editor at The Record *of Bergen County, New Jersey. This is his first article for* New Times.

Photographs L. to R.: Walter Bredel, Marty Umans, Harold Westervelt

Brief Remission: Jimmy Cleffi and his idol, Catfish Hunter

Its broad, sycamore-shaded streets are lined with graceful Victorian homes, the kind built close to the road with screened-in porches and expansive yards out back. For years, one of Rutherford's major political issues has been how to keep the traffic moving past the railroad station downtown.

You can't drive very far from the center of town without confronting the landscape people think of when they think of New Jersey—the dreary progression of highways, factories, tank farms, fast-food franchises. But because it sits high on a wooded ridge, Rutherford is literally above it all. To Vivian and Jim Cleffi, who were escaping a cramped apartment in one of the bleak industrial towns in the flatlands below, Rutherford seemed like a peaceful, green oasis.

Married in 1963 soon after they graduated from high school, the Cleffis had bought a rambling three-story house around the corner from the Pierrepont School in Rutherford's finest neighborhood. They painted it a light green, rented out the top and bottom floors, and moved into a three-bedroom apartment in-between. Vivian Cleffi, a short, attractive woman with a Mediterranean cast to her features and long, henna-red hair, decorated the house and cared for the two young boys. Jim, a darkly handsome, compactly built man, was a truck driver, hauling machine parts across the country in his red and tan Peterbilt.

If the residents thought they were safe from chemical pollution simply because Rutherford didn't look like the industrial towns nearby, they were wrong

In 1975 a third son was born, and Jim set up his own trucking firm nearby so he could spend more time at home. As the weather grew warm that spring, the couple frequently sat in their backyard with the baby and watched the two older boys play. If either of them ever noticed the acrid, soapy odor that occasionally wafted through the air, they never talked about it. It was a faint reminder of a life they thought they'd left behind.

Their oldest son, Jimmy, captured most of the attention. A mischievous, quick-tempered eight-year-old, he had large brown eyes, sandy blond hair that fell in bangs over his forehead, and a small mouth that curled slightly at the edges. When the Little League season started, Jim often came home early to take Jimmy to practice. A pitcher himself in high school, he was proud of how fast his son could throw and how fearlessly he crowded the plate at bat.

Jimmy played his first game that year on Friday, June 6, striking out the side in each of the three innings he pitched and hitting a home run. Over the weekend, though, Vivian noticed that his appetite had faded. By Monday, a yellowish cast appeared around his eyes. William Williams, the Cleffis' pediatrician, was unable to make a diagnosis when he examined Jimmy that afternoon, and ordered a blood test. Soon after Vivian and Jimmy arrived home from his office, Williams called telling her to rush her son to nearby Hackensack Hospital.

In the emergency room, Vivian recalls that Dr. Thomas Lynch told her Jimmy's red blood count was so perilously low that he needed an immediate transfusion. The doctor suggested he stay in the hospital several days for observation. He also asked Vivian if Jimmy had come in contact with any chemicals. She stayed up late that night searching medicine cabinets and closets and looking under the sink and out in the garage. All she came up with were a few cans of paint. The next morning she called the Pierrepont School and it, too, was searched. Again, nothing suspicious was found.

Jimmy's appetite soon returned and the yellow around his eyes disappeared. The doctors told Vivian there seemed to be nothing seriously wrong with the boy. On Thursday, he was given a series of blood and bone marrow tests, and the next morning he was released. Just after five that afternoon, Lynch called the Cleffis. Jim answered the phone in the kitchen. As Vivian watched the color drain from her husband's face, she ran to the bedroom and grabbed the extension in time to hear Lynch say that Jimmy should be checked into New York Hospital the next day for further tests.

The following Monday, when the Cleffis went to the hospital to learn the results, they were shown into a small eighth-floor office where five white-coated doctors were waiting. From behind his desk, Dr. Denis Miller motioned them to sit down. Vivian noticed a picture of Miller's children. They looked like nice kids, she thought. At that same moment she realized that her son was very ill.

"I wish I had some good news for you, but I don't," Miller told the Cleffis. "Your son has leukemia, and it's the very worst kind there is."

Vivian stared out the window into the bright sky. Jim looked straight ahead. Grabbing a piece of chalk, Miller turned to a blackboard behind him and began diagraming blood cells while he explained to the Cleffis the disease that had struck their son.

Until about 20 years ago physicians could do little more than diagnose the disease that now causes some 15,000 deaths each year. Now they have an increasing arsenal of drugs that hone in on the rapidly growing leukemia cells, poisoning or starving them. The drugs have been most successful in treating the most common childhood variety of the disease, acute lymphocytic leukemia, adding five years to the survival rate for half of the children afflicted. But Miller told the Cleffis their son did not have acute lymphocytic leukemia, or for that matter any of the other common varieties of the disease. Jimmy Cleffi had erythroleukemia, an exceedingly rare variety that affects the red as well as the white blood cells.

Pierrepont Probe: DEP investigator monitors the schoolyard for clues

"There are some drugs we can use," Miller said. "I can't give you any statistics, though. I can't even tell you if Jimmy's body will accept them, much less what they will do to his condition."

Miller paused. Vivian forced her eyes to meet his.

"Will they make Jimmy weak?" she asked.

"In all probability," Miller said.

"Will he lose weight?"

"Yes."

"Will he be in pain?"

"In the beginning, probably not. But we can't say what will happen later on."

"And what if we don't treat him?"

"Then he won't last very long, and you will not like what you see."

Jimmy's chemotherapy started that afternoon.

Since viruses have been found to induce leukemia in some animals, Dr. Robert Gallo, chief of the laboratory of tumor cell biology at the National Cancer Institute, thinks it would be worthwhile to look into the possibility that a virus may cause the disease in humans as well.

The virus in this case is a piece of genetic material called ribonucleic acid (RNA) enshrouded in a protein coat. Normally RNA serves as a messenger carrying instructions from its sister chemical, deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA)—the master genetic control in the cell's nucleus—to the cell's fluids, where RNA directs the production of proteins necessary for life. But sometimes the RNA-leukemia virus reverses the process, Gallo says, penetrating the host cell and transforming the DNA so that the cell becomes malignant.

Isolating an RNA-leukemia virus in humans is extremely rare. Gallo thinks the virus disappears once it transforms the DNA. When he took leukemia virus samples from gibbon apes and mixed them with human blood cells in culture, the cells showed significant precancerous changes.

There is also evidence that heredity plays a role in leukemia. For example, if one identical twin develops the disease, the other has an increased chance of developing it within a short period. People with rare genetic disorders such as Down's syndrome (mongolism) have a risk of leukemia 15 times greater than the general population.

Researchers are finding that certain environmental agents seem to cause leukemia as well, though it remains unclear

Photograph: Wide World

whether these agents trigger a latent virus, damage the blood-forming organs, or act on the cells themselves to bring about malignant changes.

Exposure to large doses of ionizing radiation was linked to leukemia after a high incidence of the disease was observed in the survivors of the atomic blasts at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The lower levels of radiation present in diagnostic X-rays reportedly have been linked to the disease, especially in children exposed in the womb. And there is a growing concern about the possible leukemogenesis of the low-level, nonionizing microwave radiation emitted by radio transmitters and radar facilities (see *New Times*, 3/6/78). Workers at military installations exposed to high doses of microwaves have developed leukemia. So have employees of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, which was irradiated by the Russians. Low levels of microwaves also have been shown to cause precancerous changes in the lymphocytes of rats.

When EPA needed to test air-sampling equipment, it came to New Jersey. The equipment passed the test, but the substance that passes for air did not

Certain chemicals have also been linked with the disease, including the drugs chloramphenicol, an antibiotic, and methyl phenyl hydantoin, an anticonvulsant. Chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides such as DDT, chlordane and lindane have long been viewed with suspicion by health experts. Higher than normal rates of leukemia among workers in the rubber, printing and plastics industries have focused suspicion on a number of other chemicals. The best-documented of these is benzene, a common industrial solvent used in commercial paint removers and furniture strippers. Benzene is also used as an additive in gasoline and is present in automotive exhaust. Workers exposed to benzene at their jobs reportedly have a risk of leukemia up to 10 times greater than normal, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) roughly estimates that exposure to benzene in the atmosphere may be responsible for up to 80 cases of leukemia across the country each year.

The list of chemicals linked with leukemia is much shorter than lists of chemicals linked with other, more common malignancies. However, Dr. Peter Infante, the director of the office of carcinogen identification at the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, suspects that other substances now known to cause blood disorders like aplastic anemia may eventually be linked with leukemia. "There are many more chemicals we just don't know anything about," Infante adds, "and new ones come along every day."

One reason the role of the environment is so difficult to measure is that people seem to vary tremendously in their susceptibility to chemicals. What's more, some people will develop the disease after a six-month exposure to a leukemogenic substance, while for others exposed to the same substance, the incubation period can stretch to more than 20 years. Something even more difficult to gauge—and ultimately much more frightening—is that simultaneous exposure to more than one agent can produce a synergistic effect resulting in more cancer than the agents could produce separately.

"We're suffering from this mentality of only looking at chemicals one by one," says Infante, "and that just isn't the real world. We're getting bombarded by hundreds of chemicals all the time."

On Wednesday, July 2, Jimmy Cleffi came home from the hospital. The drugs had stemmed the proliferation of leukemia cells in his body and he was in that most cherished state of cancer victims—remission. Meanwhile, word of Jimmy's illness spread through town. His Little League teammates played a marathon softball game and sold raffle tickets, raising $30,000 to help his parents with medical bills not covered by their insurance. On Saturday, August 23, Jimmy's idol, Yankee pitcher Catfish Hunter, paid him a visit, hoisting Jimmy onto his shoulders in front of a hundred cheering kids and then handing him an autographed baseball.

"This is great," Jimmy said, gripping the ball in his right hand, "and I'm going to pitch a no-hitter with it."

He almost looked like he could. Jimmy suffered neither the fever nor the fatigue that usually characterizes children with leukemia. His parents' hardest task was keeping him quiet. With his resistance diminished by the disease, a skinned knee could easily become blood poisoning; a cold could turn into pneumonia.

"What do you want me to do," Jimmy would ask them, "just do nothing all my life?"

Every two weeks, Vivian hired a high school girl who lived nearby to babysit for the other two children while she took Jimmy to New York Hospital for his chemotherapy. But she also devised a therapy of her own—a daily regimen of 500 units of vitamin C, 200 units of vitamin E, desiccated liver, brewer's yeast and bone meal. She bought an electric juicer and made Jimmy apple juice in the morning and carrot juice in the afternoon. She arranged with the local health food store to have five-gallon bottles of spring water delivered to the house.

Whenever Vivian told the doctors what she was doing, they encouraged her to keep it up. She suspected they didn't understand why her son was still alive.

During her trips to the hospital Vivian met many parents whose children had leukemia, and it seemed to her that a disproportionate number of them came from New Jersey. In September, she met one from Rutherford, a woman whose infant daughter had the disease. A few months later, she met a Rutherford woman whose five-year-old son had leukemia. And a few months after that, she heard there was yet another leukemia mother in town, Betsy Van Winkle, who lived just a block away. In March, soon after Betsy's 11-year-old son Wesley had been diagnosed, she called Vivian for advice and the women talked for more than two hours. It was the first of many phone calls.

During one of their conversations in June, Betsy told Vivian that her husband, Dan, had heard that an 8-year-old girl who had moved from Rutherford to the Midwest had been diagnosed with leukemia. Vivian was suspicious. There were too many cases for such a small town.

A few days later, on June 14, exactly a year and a day after he had been diagnosed, Jimmy went out of remission. He was in and out of the hospital all summer as doctors struggled to induce another remission.

On August 23, Vivian took Jimmy to the hospital with a fever of 105. It broke slightly on August 27—Vivian's birthday—but returned the next day. Early on the morning of August 30, the doctors took Jimmy to a treatment room to remove a blood clot that had formed in his rectum. He hemorrhaged during the procedure, bleeding heavily from the mouth. "Don't be upset by the way he looks," a doctor warned Vivian before Jimmy was returned to his room. "He's swallowed quite a lot of blood." Jimmy's face and smock, in fact, were smeared with red. His voice was raspy and faint. Vivian could see him suck in his nostrils as he gasped for air.

By 6 p.m., the doctors decided that Jimmy needed a tracheotomy to help him breathe. As they wheeled him out of the room, Vivian heard him scream, "Mom, stop them. Don't let them take me." He returned two hours later, a tube sticking out from his throat, his face expressionless, his body limp.

Vivian and Jim had by this time

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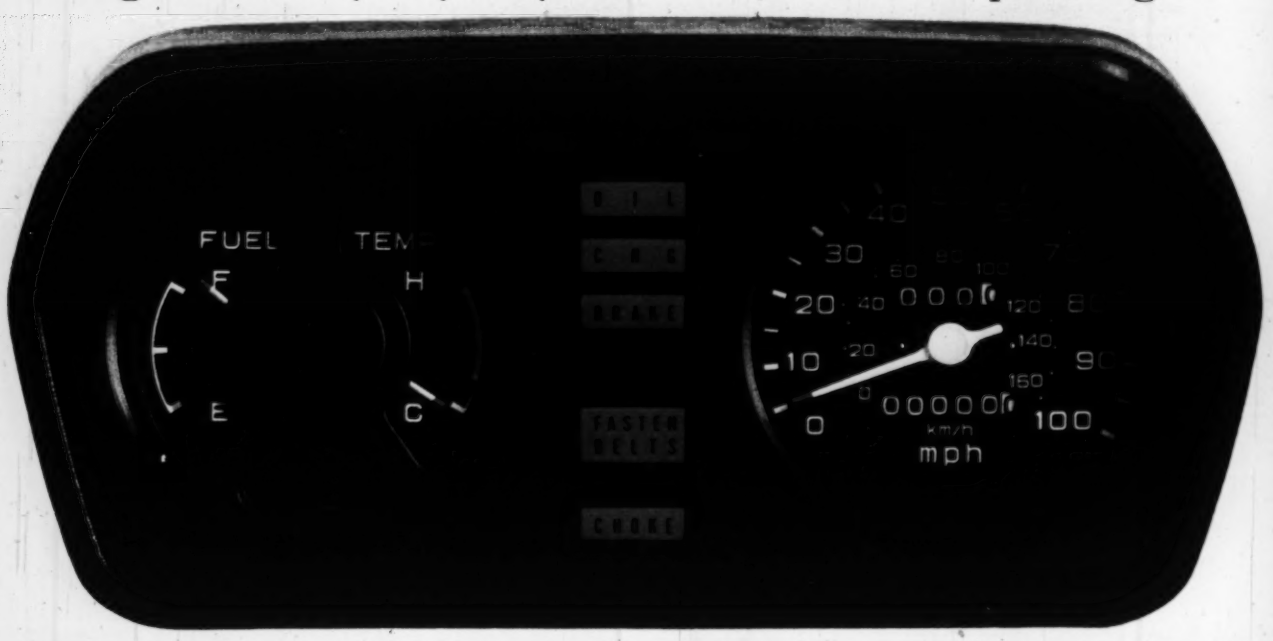

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Givaudan Corp.: Just one of 42 plants within a three-mile radius

moved into the hospital, taking turns sleeping on a folding cot in the lounge down the hall. Over the next four days, doctors continued Jimmy's chemotherapy, but the child grew weaker. On the afternoon of September 5, his stomach started to swell and doctors brought X-ray equipment into his room. A short while later another set of doctors entered the room to take more X-rays. After 15 months of doctors, Vivian Cleffi had finally had enough.

"Get out of here," she screamed at them. "Get the hell out of this room. Can't you leave him alone?"

And for the last few hours of Jimmy Cleffi's life, the doctors left him alone. Vivian left Jimmy's bedside around 11 p.m., and her husband took over. Nine-year-old Jimmy, who was curled up in bed, began to suck his thumb, then looked at his father in embarrassment. "Don't worry, I'll cover you so no one can see," his father said, leaning over the bed and gently hugging his child. "Tomorrow I'll take you home."

At 2 a.m. on September 6, Jimmy Cleffi died.

The year before Jimmy Cleffi was diagnosed, the National Cancer Institute released an ambitious nationwide study of cancer deaths over a 20-year period that indicated a correspondence between how densely populated and industrialized an area was and how many of its residents died from cancer. New Jersey, the most densely populated and industrialized state in the country, and one of the most polluted, was found to be the nation's cancer capital.

A large measure of the state's pollution is caused by motor vehicles, which is not surprising when you consider that New Jersey has more cars and more paved roads per square mile than any other state. Lane after lane of superhighway slashes across the center of the state connecting New York City to Philadelphia and Washington. Each car deposits into the state's air a load of hydrocarbons that includes benzene, prompting researchers to nickname the New Jersey Turnpike "Cancer Alley."

Perhaps a more serious source of chemical pollution is New Jersey's chemical industry itself. With 1,100 plants and laboratories, more than 95,000 employees, and a yearly production worth $8.85 billion, it is the backbone of New Jersey's economy. In addition to pumping tax dollars into the state treasury, the EPA conservatively estimates that the industry pumps 280 million pounds of chemicals into the state's air each year, the equivalent of 7,000 fully loaded tanker trucks.

Such is the state's reputation that two years ago, when the EPA needed to test air-sampling equipment, it came to New Jersey. The equipment passed the test, but the substance that passes for air did not; cancer-causing chemicals were found at every test site. At one location a block from the Givaudan Corp., a fragrance and flavor manufacturer, the equipment picked up low but measurable levels of benzene and other known or suspect carcinogens, including chlorobenzene, chloroform, 1,2-dichloroethane, tetrachloroethylene and trichloroethylene. Givaudan is located in Clifton, less than a mile-and-a-half from the Cleffis' home.

Indeed, if the Cleffis and their neighbors thought they were safe from chemical pollution simply because Rutherford didn't look like the towns nearby, they were wrong. Though Rutherford has no chemical plants of its own, Givaudan is just one of 42 industrial sites within a three-mile radius of the Pierrepont School. Pollution from these plants can easily be carried into Rutherford on changeable winds that blow almost equally from all directions.

In 1975, as part of a statewide survey, the EPA began to ask some of these firms about the chemicals they were emitting. Stauffer Chemical Company of Passaic reported emissions of more than 750 tons of chemicals, including 224 tons of acetone, 339 tons of toluene, and 201 tons of methyl ethyl ketone. And Hoffmann-La Roche, Inc., a major pharmaceutical firm in Nutley that manufactures, among other products, three drugs used to treat cancer, put its total at 1,800 tons, including 216 tons of acetone, 22 tons of benzene, 56 tons of chloroform and 14.5 tons of toluene. All these chemicals are considered suspect carcinogens by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

Of course, these figures represent only estimates supplied voluntarily by the companies, without verification by the EPA. Agency officials point out that the worst offenders are probably those firms that didn't respond at all.

Chemical plants may be the most dramatic source of Rutherford's pollution, but they are not the only source. The Hackensack Meadowlands, a more than 18,000-acre swamp east and southeast of the town, has long been a favorite illegal dumping ground for chemical waste. To control mosquitoes in the area, 50,000 to 100,000 pounds of pesticides have been sprayed there each year. Until 1967 the pesticide used was DDT, a since-banned carcinogen whose residues can last years. And of course, the opening two years ago of the 76,500-seat Giants Stadium and neighboring Meadowlands Racetrack has brought tens of thousands of cars and buses to an area already choked with traffic—and automobile pollution.

Still more chemicals enter Rutherford in the water supplied to nearly a million people by the Hackensack Water Company. Tests conducted by the firm found low levels of trihalomethanes, a family of chemicals suspected of causing cancer.

One other kind of pollution may play a role in the medical mystery Vivian Cleffi was uncovering. Because the Meadowlands—actually the floor of an ancient glacial lake—is a good reflector of radio waves, several commercial stations have located transmitters there. In fact, the Federal Communications Commission lists 6,500 sources of microwave radiation within 10 miles of Rutherford. And there are powerful radar units at nearby Teterboro and Newark airports. With its ridgetop location, Rutherford's residents may be absorbing more of this radiation than those of nearby towns.

In the months following Jimmy Cleffi's death, one question haunted his

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mother. It was the very first thing she had been asked when she brought her son to Hackensack Hospital. She could still hear Dr. Lynch's words: "Was your son exposed to any chemical?" Vivian began to think that the chemical might not have been inside her medicine cabinet or garage, as she first assumed. Perhaps it was in the air, in that acrid smell that sometimes breezed through the backyard on summer nights. Or in the water. Her suspicions were heightened the next January when Wesley Van Winkle died.

Jim Cleffi listened patiently to his wife's theories but remained skeptical. "Those environmentalists are absurd," he would tell her. "Industry's got to go on." And so the matter stood until this past January 24, when Vivian was having an afternoon cup of coffee in her kitchen with one of her neighbors. "Do you know how Teresa is doing?" Vivian was asked.

Seventeen-year-old Teresa La Forgia, a delicate young woman with a small oval face and large brown eyes, had been the Cleffi's babysitter when they were at the hospital with Jimmy. The Cleffis often talked about how much her strong-willed personality reminded them of Jimmy's. Now, as she looked across the kitchen table at her neighbor, Vivian realized that Teresa had leukemia too.

Teresa endured seven weeks of massive chemotherapy at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York before doctors induced a remission. By then Vivian had found four more cases.

On Thursday, February 2, the downstairs tenant told Vivian that an eight-year-old in the neighborhood had just been diagnosed with leukemia. The next Tuesday, Jim Cleffi learned that a former member of his Elks lodge, Dan Gasalberti, had Hodgkin's disease, a cancer of the lymph nodes that results in an abnormal production of cells in the lymphatic system. Since Hodgkin's is sometimes classified with leukemia as a blood-related cancer, Vivian included Dan on the list she had started to keep. By the next Monday, she got word of another case of Hodgkin's through the Rutherford PTA grapevine, this time a 16-year-old boy.

If there was a common denominator among the names on Vivian's list, it was the Pierrepont Elementary School. Jimmy and Wesley had both gone there. Teresa had attended the school years before. And Dan Gasalberti, the town's superintendent of recreation, frequently worked there. So on March 13, the afternoon of a school board meeting, Vivian called Dr. Luke Sarsfield, the school superintendent, and told him what she had found.

"Get all the cases confirmed and then mail the list to me," Sarsfield told her. "In the meantime, I'll try to notify state officials."

That evening, Vivian went to the meeting in the high school library to talk to Sarsfield in person. But before she could speak to him, she was told by a friend that there was yet another case of leukemia in town. This time it was a six-year-old boy.

Sarsfield received the list from Vivian in the March 22 mail. As his eyes skimmed the 11 names, he thought, "Good God, there'll be a panic in the streets." He walked down the hall to the office of the town health officer, Henry McCafferty, who borrowed some monitoring equipment from neighboring towns and spent the next few days testing the air and checking the radiation from the fluorescent lights and television sets. The tests turned up nothing unusual. When McCafferty called local physicians to double-check the names on Vivian Cleffi's list, not only did he confirm the eleven cases, he found four more cases of leukemia and one more case of Hodgkin's.

"Two cases of leukemia wouldn't be outside the realm of chance. But when you go beyond three, it's very unlikely it happened by chance alone"

By Wednesday, April 5, Dr. Ronald Altman, the chief epidemiologist of the New Jersey Health Department, had dispatched a team of three investigators to 10 hospitals in northern New Jersey and New York City and ordered them to pull the files on *all* cases of blood-related cancer suffered by Rutherford residents during the past five years. While the team uncovered 32 cases, the results didn't distress Altman. He knew the figure was about normal for a town of 20,000 people like Rutherford. But when the cases were plotted on a map, he discovered some peculiar patterns.

Rutherford statistically could expect four cases of Hodgkin's in five years. The actual Hodgkin's total was 11, and the cases were mostly clustered in the northern part of the town. Although the rate was three times what it should have been, Altman reasoned that it still was not outside the realm of statistical probability. Far more worrisome to him was the leukemia distribution.

The number of leukemia cases, 13, was actually one less than normal for the town. But strangely, there were no cases involving adults between 20 and 60—there should have been four—and only seven cases among persons over 60—there should have been 10. On the other hand, Altman found six cases between the ages of 5 and 19, where there should have been .58. What's more, his map clearly showed that all six of the cases occurred in the same 10-block neighborhood around the Pierrepont Elementary School.

"Two cases wouldn't be outside the realm of chance," Altman said. "Three wouldn't even be so many. But when you go beyond three, it means it's very unlikely it happened by chance alone. And when something happens that's very unlikely, you look for something that caused it. We felt in Rutherford, it was necessary to look."

During the next month, using a questionnaire developed by cluster experts at the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta, Altman's staff conducted interviews with the parents of the six leukemia cluster victims and also with the parents of 25 healthy Pierrepont students who would serve as the control group. The parents were asked whether there was a history of leukemia in their family and whether their children had been exposed to any drugs or X-rays before birth or in their infancy (when children are especially sensitive); what they did for a living and what chemicals they came in contact with on the job; if they owned a color television set, a microwave oven or any pets; and if they had ever refinished furniture or hired an exterminator. A few questions were added specifically for the Rutherford investigation, including whether their children had ever played, fished or camped in the Meadowlands.

Theoretically, these questions could lead to a common factor that might be a clue to the victims' common disease. But Altman wasn't optimistic. He knew a solution had eluded those who had investigated leukemia clusters before him.

The study of clusters is one of the most frustrating specialties in the frustrating field of cancer research. They seem to leap out of nowhere, as though daring researchers to uncover their cause.

"You can look and look and look and just never get anywhere," complains Dr. Glyn Caldwell, chief of the cancer branch of the CDC and a veteran of many cluster investigations. "We've got to investigate these things because that's what we're set up to do. But we're really just fumbling around in the dark."

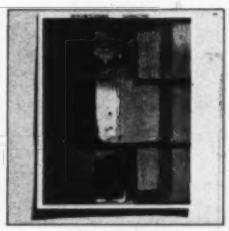
The grandfather of clusters occurred in the Chicago suburb of Niles, Illinois, where eight cases of childhood leukemia were reported between 1957 and 1960. Seven of the eight either attended the same parochial school or had a sibling who did; the eighth's best friend was a

A few words about music without words.

Bill Connors

Of Mist and Melting

The original electric guitarist in Chick Corea's Return to Forever. Bill has altered his realm here to that of the acoustic guitar, adding even further ideas and facility. He leads a quartet featuring Jan Garbarek, Jack DeJohnette and Gary Peacock.



John Abercrombie

Characters

Layers and layers of guitar textures richly appoint this ultra-guitar album. This truly *solo* effort proves Abercrombie every bit as comfortable and capable in that capacity as he's been playing behind Gato Barbieri, Billy Cobham, Dave Liebman, Dreams and a host of others.

Pat Metheny Group

Patents a whole new range of harmonic shadings. The music favors *textural* as well as technical variety; yet the collective punch matches that of any of the "name" bands now operating in "jazz rock" areas. With pianist Lyle Mays, drummer Dan Gottlieb and bassist Mark Egan.

Dave Holland

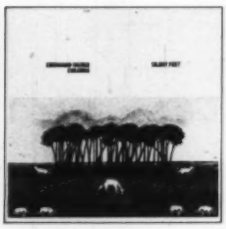
Emerald Tears

This rare glimpse at the world of the solo bass finds Holland tackling subjects worthy of several players, not to mention several instruments. But he delivers it all with total command.

Keith Jarrett

My Song

The man whose *Solo Concerts* was named album of the year by *Time, Stereo Review, The New York Times,* and *down beat.* On *My Song,* his intuitive sense of the lyrical phrase has never been better articulated. Featuring Jan Garbarek, Palle Danielsson and Jon Christensen.



Eberhard Weber and Colours

Silent Feet

One of the leading practitioners of the solid-body stand-up bass. His band Colours features ex-Soft Machine drummer John Marshall, expatriate reed/woodwind expert Charlie Mariano and pianist Rainer Brüninghaus. The music is as concerned with the dynamics of quietude as with virtuoso cookouts.

John Abercrombie, Dave Holland, Jack DeJohnette

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Egberto Gismonti

Sol Do Meio Dia

His first album for ECM, Dança das Cabeças, won him top international artist of the year in Germany and record of the year in *Stereo Review.* His latest LP, with Nana Vasconcelos, Ralph Towner, Collin Walcott and Jan Garbarek, continually crosses over the line between the erudite and the popular.

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student at the school. The only thing researchers discovered was an unusually high incidence of congenital heart disease among Niles residents.

A similar connection between a leukemia cluster and congenital heart disease occurred in Orange, Texas. Three children, all living within a half-mile of each other, developed leukemia between 1960 and 1961. Researchers found that six cases of congenital heart disease were also reported in Orange at the same time. What's more, the father of one of them eventually contracted leukemia. But what looked like a promising lead has since fizzled.

And then there was the perplexing case of the "Leukemia House." Over a 10-year period beginning in 1950, three residents of a house in Douglas, Georgia, as well as a frequent visitor to it, all developed leukemia. However, of the 53 persons who lived in the house since it was built in 1946, researchers were able to find only one other malignancy—a woman with breast cancer.

Another cluster was discovered when researchers found 31 cases of Hodgkin's disease occurring between 1952 and 1970 among people who either attended the same Albany, New York, school or had friends or relatives who did. One young man broke up with his girlfriend—who had an advanced case of Hodgkin's—only to marry another woman who died of the same disease.

A survey conducted in West Virginia between 1964 and 1973 showed similar patterns of contact between victims of Hodgkin's and leukemia, including two who rode to church together, two who were cousins, and two who were lovers.

"People need to know if there's something wrong in their town," Caldwell says. "But we just can't tell if these clusters are statistical or biological."

The New Jersey Department of Health was not the only state agency interested in Rutherford. By March 30, news of the cluster had also reached the Department of Environmental Protection. And in contrast to Altman's pessimism, Tom Burke, a 26-year-old DEP research scientist, was optimistic.

"I'm from North Jersey," Burke explains. "I know the industrial environment. And this may sound strange, but when I was growing up in Jersey City, I remember that two people I knew there died of leukemia."

A lanky young man who strives to balance his environmental fervor with scientific detachment, Burke joined the DEP 20 months ago, soon after the National Cancer Institute proclaimed New Jersey the nation's cancer capital. He has spent most of his time helping to formulate the state's cancer counterattack, an ambitious plan to monitor highly carcinogenic and widely used substances. After a few hours of reading about leukemia, Burke was convinced that if something in the environment triggered the Rutherford cluster, only a comprehensive effort of equal scope had a chance of uncovering it. To be effective, the town had to be tested not just for the few agents conclusively linked to leukemia—including benzene and radiation—but also for other chemicals that might someday be discovered either to cause the disease on their own or contribute synergistically to it.

Cancer clusters seem to leap out of nowhere as though daring researchers to uncover their cause

Burke knew there would be objections to his approach. After all, the role of pollution in cancer is hotly debated, not just by representatives of industry but by health officials as well. And of all the forms of the disease, leukemia is one of the most baffling. For one thing, while the mortality rates for some cancers are 30 to 40 percent higher in New Jersey than in the rest of the nation, the state's leukemia death rate is actually a shade lower than the national average.

But he reasoned that the dramatic advances in leukemia chemotherapy meant more patients were surviving, so the steady mortality rate might in fact be masking a greater incidence of the disease. As for the state's relatively low leukemia rate, Burke admits he is puzzled.

With the backing of Dr. Peter Preuss, director of the DEP's Division of Environmental Cancer, Burke devised a schedule to test Rutherford's air, water and soil, and by mid-April, the Radiation Response Team had begun the investigation.

Burke estimates that so far the project has cost tens of thousands of dollars, not including the three-and-one-half months of his own time. He adds that the results will not necessarily be of value until they can be compared with results of similar tests from around the state, something he says may be months or even years away. Nevertheless, of all those engaged in the Rutherford investigation, Burke is alone in expressing anything that remotely approaches optimism.

Even at worst, he is convinced the tests will provide the first comprehensive look at the scope of environmental pollution and furnish insight not just into the causes of leukemia but of cancer in general—something all the more valuable in a state that will lose about 15,000 of its residents to cancer this year.

But there is one prospect that gives Burke pause. There is always the chance that whatever caused Jimmy Cleffi and the others to become ill drifted into town one evening on a warm summer breeze and disappeared, never to return.

Vivian and Jim Cleffi were sitting at their kitchen table. She was sipping coffee made with spring water from a five-gallon jug standing nearby. He was drinking Budweiser from a tall goblet. For weeks, they had endured a seemingly endless onslaught of reporters and television crews. They were both exhausted, and it showed.

To the journalists who apologized for their intrusions, Vivian Cleffi sometimes said, "Don't worry. It's for the cause." But it was clear from her weary expression that the cause wasn't enough. The Cleffis are still struggling with their son's death, and rather than ease their grief, the last few months have deepened it.

"I was bitter when my son was diagnosed, I was bitter when he died, and I'm bitter now," said Jim. "Sometimes I tell Vivian, 'Hey, let's blow everything and go someplace new.'"

Most of the time, Vivian seems determined to stay in Rutherford. She has formed a citizen's group, "We Who Care," and says that if the organization isn't satisfied with the state's report on the cluster, due at the end of July, it just may launch its own investigation. And she related with pride how on a recent afternoon, when a suspicious chemical smell drifted through the town, "We Who Care" members tracked down the offending plant, then barraged state and federal officials with phone calls until the odor disappeared.

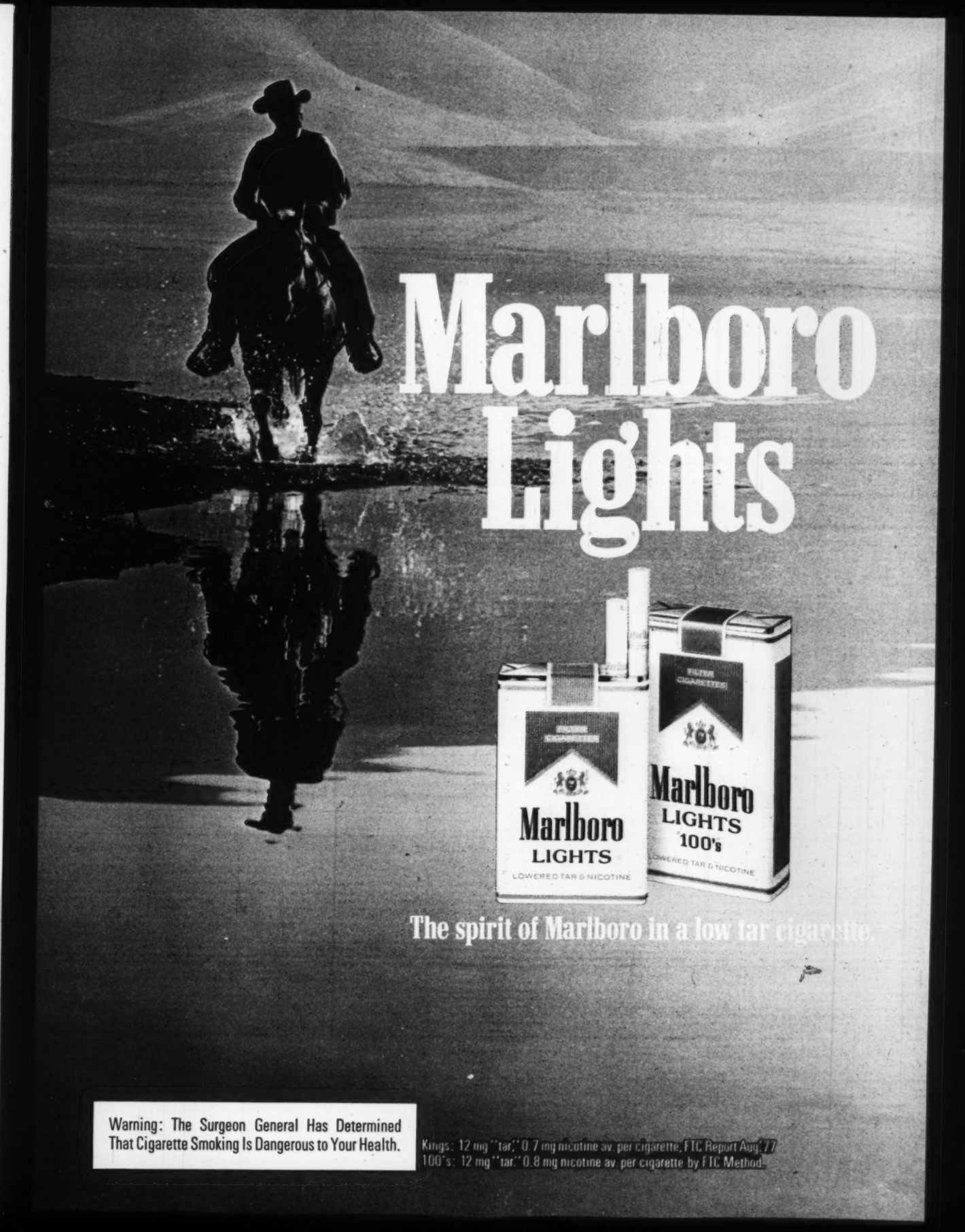
But she also continues to speak of moving to a place where her children can breathe clean air without her having to struggle so hard for the privilege. She is, in short, living day by day, just as she has since that June day three years ago when she rushed Jimmy to the hospital.

Her eyes moved from her husband to the window. A young boy bounced a ball in the driveway next door.

"Sometimes we feel so cooped up in the house we just have to get out," Jim said. "The other night we went out for dinner and instead of coming right home, we went to the field for a walk. It was the same place Jimmy played ball."

"But I just couldn't wait to get out of there," Vivian said, turning back toward her husband. "You look at the kids and they're playing . . . they're Jimmy's friends." She paused, and when she started to speak, her voice was a pitch higher.

"You look at the kids and here they are, they're playing in the same rotten air. You look at them and you can't help thinking to yourself, 'Which one of them is going to be next?'" ●



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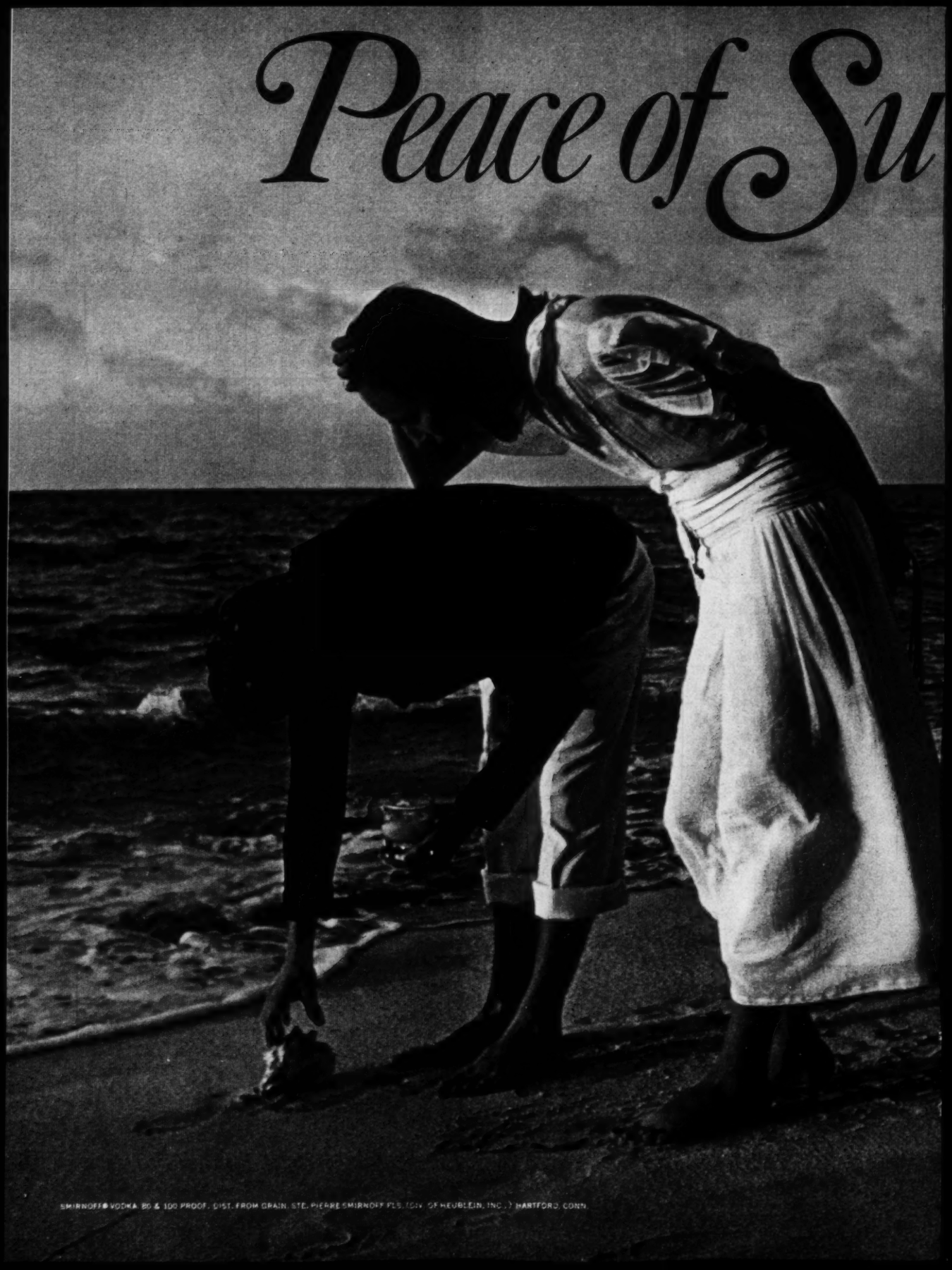
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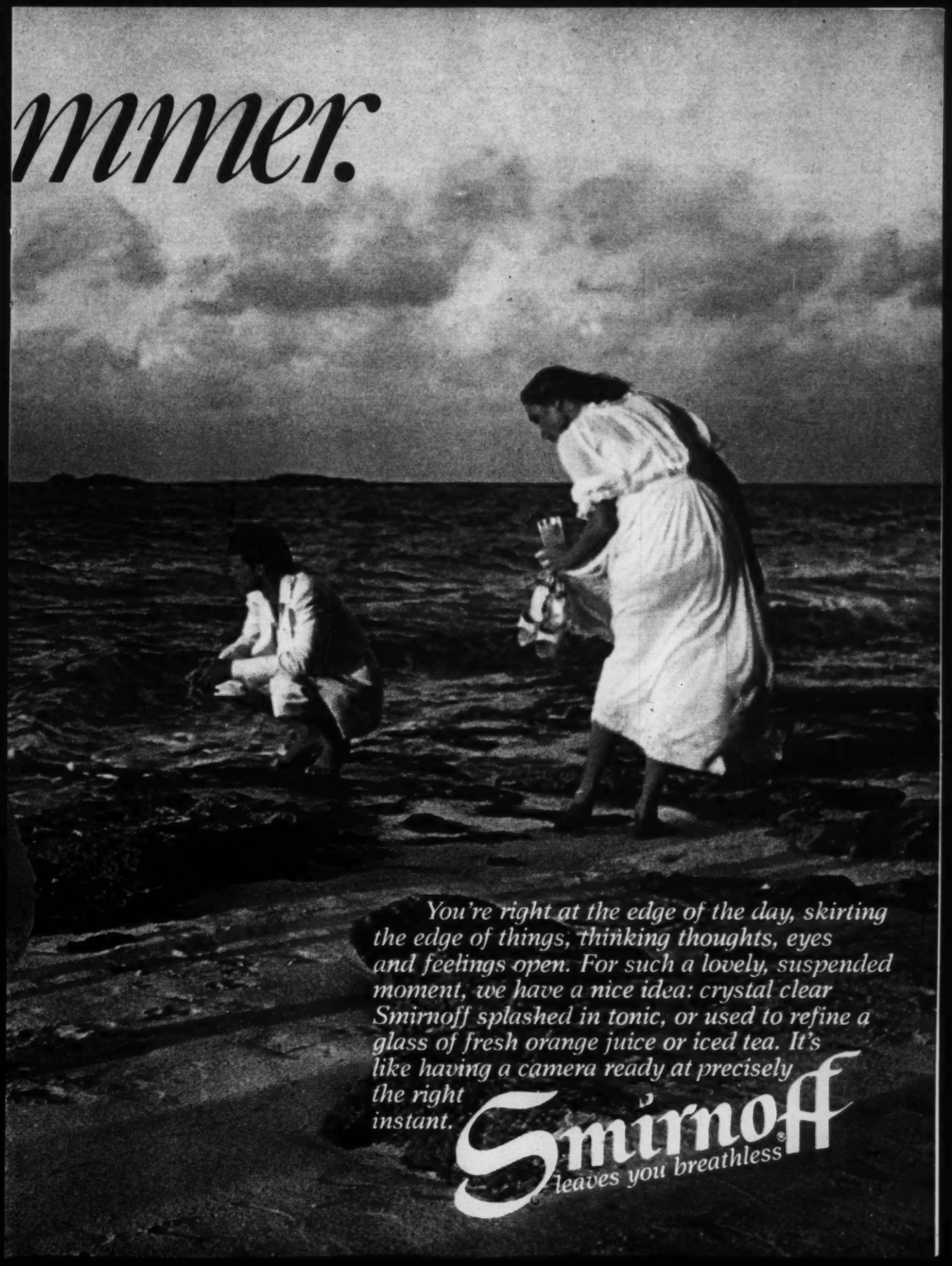
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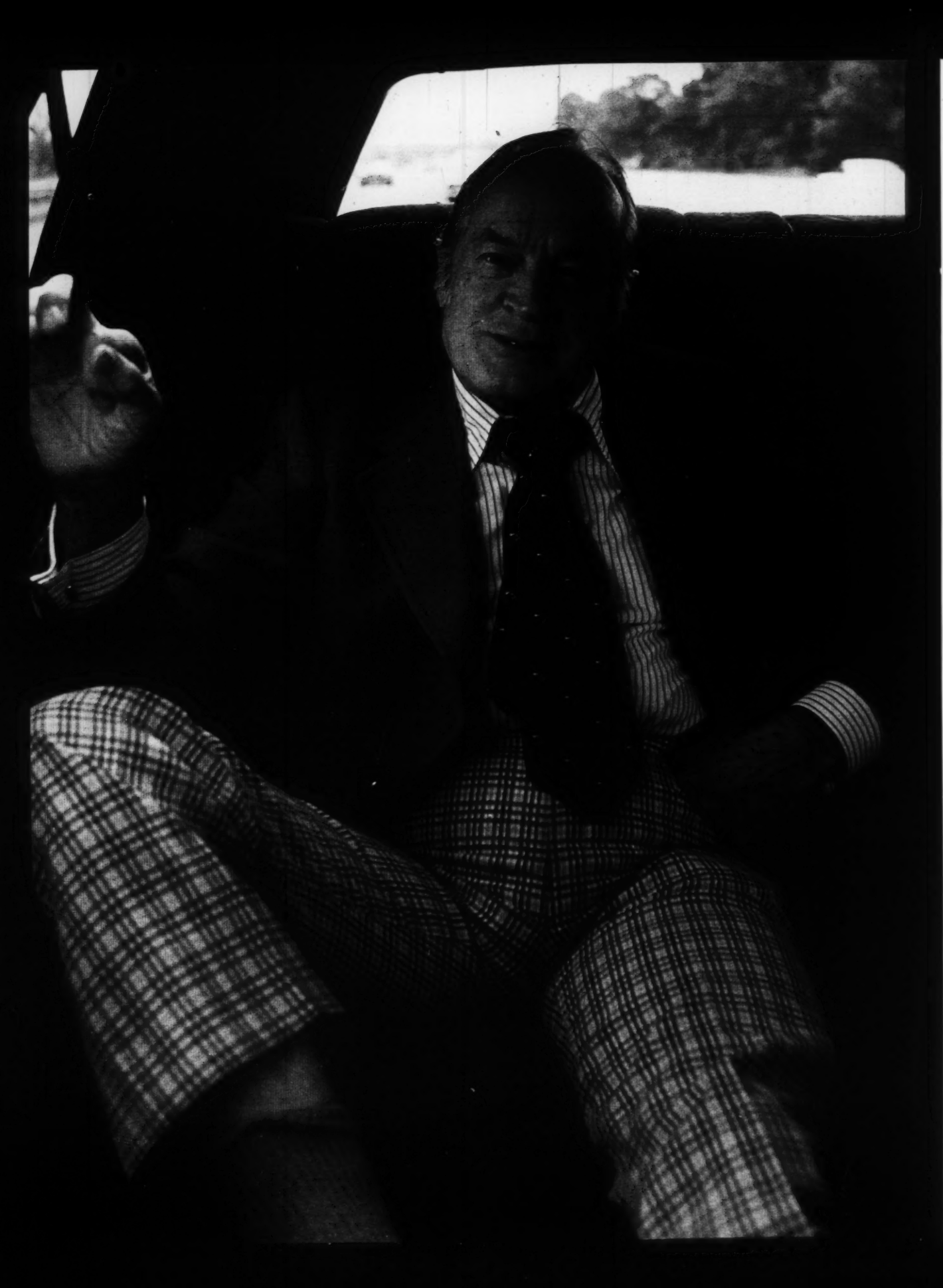


On the Road With Bob Hope

San Bernardino, California. Fargo, North Dakota. Moscow, Idaho. Portland, Maine. Anita Bryant, angel dust, Hamilton Jordan, the Panama Canal...

by Peter W. Kaplan

Each April, San Bernardino, California, has an Orange Show. If you're jaded, or McLuhanized, or already have your feet in the 21st century, the San Bernardino fair is a vivid springtime anachronism. Like Disneyland, the Los Angeles Airport and many things in California, it has the already-decayed look of the futurism of the fifties—that is, of a time when things are modern (as in streamlined) and advanced (as in superhighways), but not necessarily *different*. This is where people collect to sweat together and to be entertained in the flesh.

Between the cement lake and the rides, in Swing Auditorium, a group of black dancers is putting on a *Rocky* ballet. This accurately costumed, poetic reenactment of the *Rocky* plot has the audience in the huge stage hall enraptured. Offstage, a young black man, rib-cage skinny, is strapping himself into a set of belts studded with light bulbs. "My name's Slim," he says finally, very seriously, "and I'm dressing to be C3PO in the *Star Wars* ballet."

The house goes dark, the *Rocky* dancers scurry offstage and begin quick-changing clothes—fast, faster—until a voice calls over the sound system: "Ladies and gentlemen, the *Star Wars* ballet!" The theme strikes up, the audience applauds, and the flying dancers hit the stage, barreling through the illusory strobe light barriers, making little Sand Creature steps and bleeps, hurling in spins over each other until Slim plugs himself in and, flashing like a Route 3 diner sign, marches jerkily across the stage as the audience pounds its feet.

This is vaudeville 1980. A short man in shirt-sleeves bangs on a dressing room door and calls for the headliner to come take a look. "Bob! This is the act you wanted to see!"

"Right right right," says Bob Hope, swiftly stepping out. Here he comes, looking sensational for a geezer. He's 75, and let's get it over with: He doesn't look it, not close. If there's a Hope mystique, a lot of it has to do with his preservation. He bobs when he walks, his hands are strong, his white sideburns bushy. Most of all, his face is always working—never does the life slip out of it and leave it confused. He peers at Slim C3PO, sizes up the audience, looks back at Slim clannishly—he's been that hungry, although certainly not recently.

Hope stands watching Slim and his dancers, who look like the Nicholas Brothers of the future. Staring admiringly, he grades them: "Hey, that's somethin' else, innit?"

Moving back into his dressing room, he runs into a California state assemblyman, and then two emissaries of the American Legion waiting to present him with plaques. A British film crew swarms around, full of limey wisecracks. A representative of the Army waits while Hope weaves down the hall to congratulate the *Star Wars* troupe.

Young black performers drape themselves over Hope, the girls kiss him, the men grab his old thick neck and slap his hands five. Bob Hope quickly becomes very, very young—28, perhaps. He grins, slaps five back, takes the kisses delightedly, grins bigger, tells jokes to the dancers, taps a little bit for them. Then he swivels and, bouncing fast into the dressing room, stops to pose for a picture with a midget and his agent, lifts the midget, receives another plaque. "Hey, I'm gettin' a lot of nice stuff here," he says.

Hope hears the opening strains of "Thanks for the Memory" and, hands swinging at hip level, glides toward the stage as the orchestra reaches a crescendo. The audience is on its feet; the ovation goes on and on.

"Did they introduce me?" says the wily statesman. Of the preceding act he says, "Hey, aren't they great?" Then, "I just did an outdoor concert in front of 250,000 kids. Two hundred and fifty thousand, can you believe it? The kids got the jam and the promoters got the bread. There was so much Angel Dust the stadium had a halo and wings."

Hope goes through dozens of jokes, playing his audience with a precision and sureness that keeps them perpetually in sync with him, delighted all the way to be matching sensibilities with this funny, funny man. By the time he says that he's going to do a song he likes to associate with the "kids coming home from Vietnam" and sings "Tie a Yellow Ribbon 'Round the Old Oak Tree," he has a devoted legion on his hands, anxious, *over*anxious to scream at jokes about prune juice and Billy Carter.

He is a beloved comedian, and all he has to do for his laughs is to be Bob Hope: walk like Bob Hope, sneer like Bob Hope, be American like Bob Hope. For that, he has the deep gratitude of his audience. As though they were a constituency, he serves them; and even though he's won himself an appointment for life, he slacks not in campaigning like mad and agreeing with them on every subject known to man.

The day after Hope played San Bernardino, I called his devoted assistant, Ward Grant, to ask when I could see Hope. "He's rehearsing for the Oscars tomorrow, and the day after that he's gotta rehearse all day." How about the day after that? "Let me just tell you—the day after the Oscars he's got a hospital benefit in Beverly Hills; the day after that he's editing his TV show; the day after that he flies to Calgary to do the Lions Club benefit; the day after that he's going to Rapid City, South Dakota; then, the day after that he's going to the University of North Dakota; the day after that he's going to Fargo, North Dakota, for a concert; the day after that he's going to Mitchell, South Dakota, for a Dakota Wesleyan University benefit." Perhaps after Dakota Wesleyan? Ward considered it: "The next day he works on material, then dedicates the Eisenhower Wing of the hospital he's been working on, and then he goes to Madison Hospital in Madison, Wisconsin. Then he's going to Billings, Montana, and then he's going to Pocatello, Idaho, for Idaho State University. Then the day after that he's going to Moscow, Idaho, and the day after that he's flying through to Port-

Photograph opposite by Morgan Renard/Sygma; this page: Camera 5

Hope Spawned: Little Leslie Hope on display (top); the vaudeville star with his wife, Dolores (center); and solo, on horn

All he has to do for his laughs is to be Bob Hope: walk like Bob Hope, sneer like Bob Hope, be American like Bob Hope

land, Maine." How about Portland, Maine? "Good," Ward said to me in Los Angeles. "Meet us in Portland, Maine."

Hope. Who is this guy who has fast-talked his way into our lives for the last 40 years? It's not as though he's had to force his way in; Americans have bought Bob Hope overwhelmingly, passionately, as long as he's been available. On September 27, 1938, Hope's Pepsodent radio show went on the air; and inside of a year, it was the number-one show in radio. Since then a generation of talking comics has copied his motions, his style, his rhythm; the speed of Hope became the pace by which they gauged how fast, how deep, how sophisticated was their own comedy. Oh, go on, highbrows, take your great comedians and your intellectual clowns—but look at what America thought was really funny: Bob Hope, the sanctified wise guy; Bob Hope, the white-collar coward; Bob Hope, the boor with a heart of gold. No one spoke for America more than he. Surely this is the most successful comic *ever*—when he turned 75 in May, the Kennedy Center celebration not only became a national event but was NBC's top-rated show of the month.

Hope moved through stages as a public force. First he was the young, snotty monologuist—a handsome brat who couldn't get enough words into a minute. ("This is Bob 'Back on the Air' Hope broadcasting from Chicago on the Great Lakes telling you that if your teeth are Erie, use Pepsodent and they'll soon be Superior and you'll never Michigrin.") His voice sliced through the air with a brisk and slightly nasty confidence—the class wise guy having his say while the teacher's in the bathroom.

He was a mock delinquent, though, intimating a rebel's irreverence without delivering on it. In him you could find the harmless manifestation of disturbing things: the cowardly retreat from real danger, the smoking ears of churning libido, the taking of punishment for speaking out of turn (Hope always allowed the return volleys to be faster and more stinging than his original serves). In a fabulously successful string of movies—*The Cat and the Canary* (1939), the *Road* pictures, *My Favorite Blonde* (1942), *Monsieur Beaucaire* (1946), *The Paleface* (1948), *My Favorite Spy* (1951)—he was smart, not warm, approximating the most base, cowardly and vain traits that the calculating comic knew his audience suspected in themselves.

He has been a tightrope walker with a queen-size mattress waiting three feet below. He has had his dignity destroyed in a thousand ways while never taking the fall. During the forties and fifties, he developed a pattern of tearing himself down on the proscenium, with the implicit understanding that he never be perceived as anything but a sanctified patriot.

Hope did his civic duty by entertaining American troops overseas, and it soon paid off. A pet of the Eisenhower Administration, he was able to roll into the sixties collecting medals, honorary degrees and premature eulogies by the dozens. Fifth-graders could find him in the *World Book* with a longer entry than the Hopi Indians, and a picture to boot. Adults, adolescents and children fell for him; only the cynics resisted.

His image-making was brilliant—he'd hoist himself up to his targets' size and then shoot rubber darts at them. As the years went on, his shots had less and less sting, but he still delivered them with an *attitude*, a trick-fire rhythm, a tart surliness that would delightfully dissolve into a bright, smart, intimate grin when he inevitably let the illusion of his character fade. It was a dance where the veil lifted, and under the veil we saw: just kidding, folks. The message said the man with the acid edge had a pasteurized soul.

His canonization had become supreme, superseding almost anybody's public life. It took on spectacular colors: In 1963, the kidnappers of Frank Sinatra Jr. had first considered victimizing Hope's oldest son. According to the testimony of an FBI special agent, the thugs abandoned the idea of absconding with young Tony because, in their words, "Hope is such a good American and has done so much in entertaining troops."

But Hope began to lose touch with the reality of what was funny. In 1967, trying to make his act more relevant for the GIs, he met dead silence when he told the troops in Thailand: "I bring you great news from the land of liberty. It's still there—even if you have to cross a picket line to enjoy it." (Hope finally managed to break the ice by introducing Miss World with the conclusion, "She's no square.")

Spring of 1968 brought a new milestone in offensiveness with the incredibly insulting monologue delivered at the Academy Awards ceremony, which had been postponed due to the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. To the mixed gasps and hisses of the crowd, Hope quipped: "About the delay of two days... It didn't affect me, but it's been tough on the nominees. How would you like to spend two days in a crouch?"

Once the Nixon years began, Hope came out of the political closet, palled around with Spiro Agnew, mouthed off about his GOP sentiments and, at the end of his 1970 Christmas tour, told a news conference that "it's a great thing to have compassion for other people. I just hope these politicians will kind of keep their mouths shut and kind of blend in and try to get this whole war together... We don't need another Czechoslovakia. That's what Southeast Asia could be. We've got to think about that." These sentiments emerged just around the time it was rumored that GIs were beginning, in le-

Photographs this page and throughout, unless credited otherwise, are courtesy of NBC-TV, Burbank and Hope Enterprises.

He has been a tightrope walker with a queen-size mattress waiting three feet below

gion, to boo the Hope show.

Things became more turbulent for America's sweetheart. J. Anthony Lukas did a hatchet job on him in *The New York Times Magazine* (10/4/70); The Family of Man Dinner offered and then withdrew its offer of its 1971 award; Hope was anything but welcome on eastern college campuses. The world had changed. "He's reprehensible," one student leader said in 1971. And yet his insouciant sneer refused to uncurl, and his brilliance as a comedy stylist didn't dissolve. He knew how to speak irony, how to breathe an air of disbelief and sharpness into words, and how to bring the rhythm of ammunition to everything.

Last year on the *Dick Cavett Show,* Woody Allen and Cavett discussed comedy:

CAVETT: Everybody knows you admire Perelman and Benchley and Kaufman and Groucho and all, but [one night in California] we both confessed to a childhood infatuation with Bob Hope...

ALLEN: There's a tendency to confuse his TV work and his politics with the best of his stuff—I found him a very, very gifted comedian. There are films he did, if you watched with a full audience, you'd find quite hilarious, like *Monsieur Beaucaire*... *Fancy Pants*... I mean *really* funny... not funny that you have to compromise yourself... I think if someone put together a compendium of his pictures... it would become apparent how talented he is... People are not aware of how physically *graceful* he is... when he kind of glides into a room and deals these things off and they're wonderful. When I try and do them... it's leaden.

"I was first aware of Hope on radio," Cavett told me. "He was flashy, fast, hilarious. Then one day I saw that he was going to appear in Lincoln, Nebraska. I had to keep rereading the ad: *'IN PERSON.'* And then he played and I saw him and I kept thinking, 'My God—*There he is.*' I was transfixed." Cavett smiled a crooked grin and his chin shifted, Hope-like. "I wanna tellya, I used to walk like him, practice his walk in front of the mirror. Practice his gestures. Everything he was I wanted to be. I remember realizing as a kid that women were saying what a handsome man he was. A funny guy who was a lion among the ladies. He obsessed me."

Cavett said that he knew he'd made it in show business the first time he worked on the *Tonight Show*: "Hope was on. I saw him in the corridor, and we were both walking toward the elevator and then we both got in. I was the only other one in the elevator with Bob Hope. And then he turned to me and he said, 'Hey, my man, how are you?'" Cavett laughed, fully, at the sheer flush of the moment.

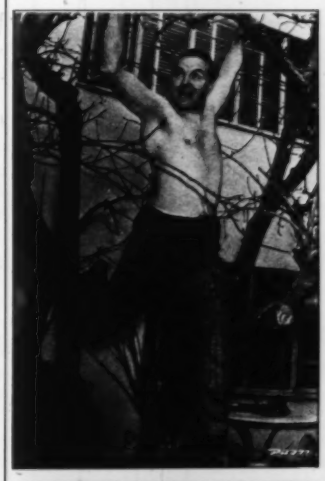
The cabbie who drove me from Cavett's office was also eager to talk about Hope. Like millions who'd viewed Hope's hugely successful NBC specials, he brimmed with PR information. "Oh, that Bob Hope, quite some guy," he said. "Quite some guy. He's traveled over 8 million miles and has gone overseas virtually every year from 1941 to 1972. Works and works and just never seems to stop, just keeps stomping along; never sees his wife, Dolores, either. She's a lovely lady and a devout Catholic who was a bandsinger. He was playing in the musical *Roberta* when he met her, that was during the early 1930s here in New York. That was quite a hit, and you know who else was in it with him? George Murphy, who later became a senator from California, and Fred MacMurray, who they say is as rich as Hope." How much is Hope worth? "In the vicinity of $500 million. Hope's the one they talk about when it comes to money, but he's got his problems. One time he almost went blind. They found something in his eye, and everybody was worried, but it worked out all right. And then there was the house that cost him $2.5 million that burned down in Palm Springs. And then when Crosby died, he was quite broken up. They weren't what you'd call superclose, but they had a fine working relationship and a mutual respect." Asked what political party Hope belonged to, the cabbie said, "You're some kind of jerk to ask me that one, son. Everyone knows that he's Republican."

For years I've been on radio... You remember radio—blind television... What a fine-looking audience... (looks audience over and counts with his fingers) Oh, excuse me—I thought I was still at Paramount working on a percentage... Here I am and very thrilled about it... You like this? (models his suit)... The Frigidaire people had a preview of the show the other night... They introduced me as "The Great Lover," and I heard a woman in the audience say, "I thought Alben Barkley was a much younger man..."

—Bob Hope on his first television show, April 9, 1950

Bob Hope's house in Toluca Lake, near Burbank and away from what's fashionable, has electric gates, big loud dogs, and huge walls overgrown with green. Adjacent to the house are the Hope offices, distinct from the Hope Enterprises, Inc., offices in Burbank, the Hope offices at NBC, and the offices of the PR firm handling Hope's affairs.

Led down one corridor, past a portrait of the founder (Bob Hope), one comes to a vault. Not a door, and not a wall safe, but a vault—big and thick, with various locks and tumblers. Inside it is cool, and the walls are lined with file cabinets. Inside those cabinets are millions of jokes—a lifetime, an era. Jokes classified by personality (dead and alive), by locale, by disaster, by fruit. Millions of jokes—used, unusued, good, bad, ready to be recycled, ready to never see daylight lest the author commit hari-kari. The work



Solid Growth Investment: Hope heard Paramount's call and worked like mad for an image (top); learned to handle the unseen audience; knew Doris Day before she was a Virgin

Photograph at top: Camera 5

"A funny guy who was a lion among the ladies," Cavett said. "He obsessed me"

The Patriot: Bore any burden (1942); supported any friend (1948); opposed any foe (1967).

of scores of writers over the years—writers who'd sweated for Hope, gotten ulcers for him, idolized him, waited for Christmas presents from him, were awakened in the middle of the night by him: "Hey Al, whaddya have on floods?" Oranges, typhoons, Stuart Symington, Adolph Zukor, television, nuclear war, income tax, Richard Nixon, Cardinal Cushing, Dial-a-Prayer, golf, Mickey Rooney, Mickey Mantle, Pepsodent, Harry Truman, Jack Kennedy, J. Edgar Hoover, Dictaphones, Crosby . . . Crosby's kids . . . Crosby's so rich . . . the stork saw Crosby . . . Crosby's voice . . . Crosby's ears . . . Crosby's orange juice . . . Crosby's flab. General Eisenhower, Joe McCarthy, Eugene McCarthy, Eugene (Oregon), Gene Tunney, John Tunney, Jerry Brown, Pat Brown, Myrna Loy, Madeleine Carroll, Cary Grant, girdles, babies, tooth powder, 1-A, 4-F, hi-fi, martinis, Ford's golf, Agnew's golf, Ike's golf, Westy, Ky, acne, chastity, shortness, skinniness, Jack Paar, Tiny Tim, Eleanor Roosevelt, Joey Heatherton . . .

"Don't let them ever tell you *ever* that Hope's not complicated," Mort Lachman says. Lachman, aka "The Owl" (large black-framed glasses, an intellectual's intense peer, a night-dweller's doughy complexion), is a gentle man with a tough sensibility and just a touch of a Victor Moore lisp. He wrote for Hope from 1947 (starting at $75 a week) until he went to work for Norman Lear and produced *All in the Family* in 1976.

"He'd read through every script and check every joke he thought was funny," Lachman says. "Then he'd go back and cross the checks on the jokes that were funny enough to use. *Then* he'd read them through a third time and draw a ring around the jokes that were usable. We called ourselves the Double Cross and Circle Club. He was the best editor, the smartest guy, I've ever seen."

"So smart!" says Sherwood Schwartz. Acknowledged as one of the sweetest men in Hollywood, Schwartz is famous for creating the cult show that came to symbolize video dreck: *Gilligan's Island*. (He is now preparing a two-hour TV movie, *Rescue from Gilligan's Island*, which he promises will have "six of the original cast members.") He became involved with Hope in 1939.

"When you wrote for Hope," Sherwood Schwartz says, "you learned not to put one word extra in. Electronic sound, radio, was a new medium, and Hope was the smartest guy in it. He knew how to pack it, pace it and fill it. You had to write all bone and make a great joke in 24 words or less."

Hope was the first comedian to rely on writers. He understood he had an entire country to cover, a fantastic race of events to trail and, most importantly, that the immediacy of the electronic medium could dry up a comedian in no time. Hope hired 12 young men, some of whom would become incredibly successful: Lachman, Schwartz, Norman Panama, Melvin Frank, Jack Rose, Mel Shavelson, Milt Josephsberg, Jack Douglas, Norman Sullivan. Nearly all of the ex-writers—and Hope fired freely when he felt he'd used up a writer's freshness—speak reverentially of their old commander.

"He was the smart-ass on radio," Lachman says. "He was a revolution. In college, we used to stand around on campus every morning after a Hope monologue and repeat his jokes to each other because he'd said exactly what we'd all wished we'd said. Don't forget, we were a generation where none of us could get laid. Hope could talk fast. That's where the energy went. Hope taught us a lesson. *Don't* get the girl, singers get the girl. We get the laughs, and that's better."

Norman Sullivan has written for Bob Hope since 1938; it's said he never leaves his house. "If I sound tired it's 'cause I was up until 4 a.m. on the goddamned Academy Awards," he rasps into the phone.

"Hope's no different than if you walked into a scene in a movie with him," he says. "He's just like that. I've never seen him thoughtful, despondent or intellectual. He's intelligent, all right, but it'll take a while to find that out. No one likes an intelligent person. That's his rapport with the audience—he doesn't come off intelligent and he *won't use big words*.

"What else do you wanna know? Is he a kind man? I don't know him that well to tell you. He's sort of a loyal guy. He thinks Nixon was a good president. How loyal can ya get? He doesn't call socially, he calls for jokes. On a long road trip, two or three times a night. He's in Australia, right, and there's an explosion at the Perth Hotel and he calls me in the middle of the night. So I made some explosion jokes up. 'I got in the elevator but the hotel went up first.' Of course, that wasn't the first time I had to make up explosion jokes. I remember the time in Vietnam when the hotel in Saigon blew up. He needed some explosion jokes then."

A terrible night, the evening of the 50th Annual Academy Awards ceremony. The press is tuna-canned off in a distant room, watching monitors on which Hope, who has been invited back as the solo host in honor of the Golden Anniversary, is bombing. His monologue is not just bad, it is not enjoyed by the audience. His usual cat-footed delivery seems, for once, unsure. Who knows why? Hope's people are furious that the Academy wouldn't allow them to use their own cue-card man; Hope finds his cue-card movements crucial. Besides, the old boy's been on his feet for nine hours, and the exhaustion seems to be affecting his speech. It's not unclear, it's just not *surgical*. It is, however, predictable:

Hey, can you believe this group . . . All on the same stage at the same time . . . It looks like a clearance sale at the Hollywood Wax Museum

Photograph second from top: *The Saturday Evening Post*

"No one likes an intelligent person. That's his rapport with the audience. He doesn't come off intelligent and he *won't use big words*"

. . . All Oscar winners. I'm the only one that had to show my American Express Card to get on stage . . . Of course many Oscar winners are absent . . . Liz Taylor's back on her farm in Virginia . . . Still trying to milk a chicken . . . Anyway good evening and welcome to the real Star Wars *. . . I haven't seen so much expensive jewelry going by since I watched Sammy Davis Jr.'s house sliding down Coldwater Canyon . . . After the show Hamilton Jordan has invited all the losers to join him in the Remorse Room of the Ramada Inn . . . To spit drinks on the winners . . .*

"Rapid fire! That was the success," Bob Hope says, on the phone from Calgary, Alberta (the Lions Club benefit). "Here, listen to this—'*HI!* This is Bob "Pepsodent" Hope living by the skin of my teeth.' See what I mean, we were rapid fire, all right. And I had writers, I knew to hire writers and nobody else was, and we changed radio. I did fantastic variety, a variety of jokes nobody else did. Groucho was fantastic, had great timing, but I did a greater scope of jokes.

"You know, I had a vaudeville personality. I'd come out and kind of bruise the audience, y'know, and then the stooges would come out and beat me up, sort of put me in my place, y'know. The audience likes that."

They hadn't been mad for it at first, though. Hope had nervously played New York's Palace in 1931 and, after a shaky performance with bad press, considered going home. ("They say that Bob Hope is the sensation of the Midwest," wrote the critic for the *Daily Graphic*. "If that's so, why doesn't he go back there?") But, Hope says, "I learned to work on my timing and things sort of clicked.

"By the time I got on radio, I had to find a format, and so I'd put together this material with the writers and we'd cut out the waste. We had a big ratio of written material to what we used. It was sensational. The thing went from nothing to number one in three months. In four minutes we'd do 30 jokes, one every 10 seconds or so, and the kids loved it. Fast fast fast." Talk talk talk. Move move move.

New England is a funny place for Hope. Portland is old, ascetic and making the switch to modernity with ugly little spasms: poured concrete office buildings, the inevitable civic center, a *big* McDonald's. Winding around all these are tiny, narrow, unevenly laid brick paths. Across from the big McDonald's is a little luncheonette called Lou's Corner. In Lou's window is a cardboard sign with a crayoned version of the famous profile: WELCOME BOB HOPE TO PORTLAND.

Hope will play the Cumberland County Civic Center, and it hasn't sold out yet. This doesn't worry Bob Cole, Portland's Sol Hurok, the man who booked Hope. The Civic Center is *huge*, a sports arena with aisles of plush pastel seats that form a parabola around the stage. It is meant for roars, conventions, behemoths with balls, sticks and gloves who careen around and pummel each other. It is a scary place.

Bob Cole likes it. He is self-definedly small town, and he looks a little like a Preston Sturges mayor: He's small and he struts. He's thrilled to have Bob Hope at his show.

"I like what he stands for," Cole says. "Clean comedy and the friendly American." He coughs. "The people in the state of Maine like this sort of honesty and sense of humor. There's no pomp and ceremony about Bob Hope. Here at Cole enterprises we try and build family audiences. I'm a middle-of-the-road producer. And families"—here he looks me square in the nose—"*like Bob Hope.*" He smiles. "Y'know, I haven't met a veteran yet who hasn't said"—he approximates a veteran—"'Boy, I'd go anywhere to see that guy.'" Bob Cole looks dark. "I could never put Elvis Presley in this building and feel a sense of identification." Bob Cole looks dreamy. "If we could someday book Perry Como . . ."

Cole walks me around the building. "Bob Hope's *symbolic*." He takes me into a storage room and closes the door. "Young people are too concerned with where they're going tomorrow. Not with where they are today. *I don't book Shelley Berman*," he says, pausing to make the point. "Hope attacks horizontally. *Hope*'s not a comedian. Hope's like Sinatra. Sinatra's an institution. Hope's an ambassador." Cole now appears to be reading USO cue cards. "Hope uses comedy to deliver a message," he says. "The message is inherent in his *visitation*."

A small knot of reporters waits for Bob Hope's plane to land at Portland International Jetport. Bob Cole is worried that something will blow; he's staring expectantly at the sky and herding reporters around, making sure that *nobody*'s standing in front of him. With him is a cluster of nice ladies, the sponsors of the YWCA benefit that Hope's evening concert will support. One very nice lady's name is Hope, and there is a lot of giggling about the various "Hope meet Hope" alternatives that might, sometime within the next half-hour, occur. Bob Cole is too worried to giggle.

Finally, the Delta-bird taxis up. Bob Cole is at the head of the line, waiting for the ramp to be put into place so that he can race up and welcome the legend. The door opens and out comes Hope, natty checked golf hat in place, waving the inevitable golf club. Cole grabs Hope's hand and guides him briskly down the mobile stairway. Hope walks through the crowd like the purest politician: "Hi! Gladtaseeya, nicetaseeya, gladtaseeya, hi! Nicetaseeya! Yeah, hi! Hiya!"

Bob Hope steps into the Portland airport and the 200 or so waiting passengers, airport

B.H. SOCKO AT B.O.: Middle-class coward, *Son of Paleface* (1952); Hope's streamlined comedy's velocity was on a different planet than Jack Benny's captivating character subtlety; he defined American urbanity by transplanting it in *Monsieur Beaucaire* (1946)

Photograph second from top: Camera 5; bottom: Globe Photos

"Hope's not a comedian. Hope's like Sinatra. Sinatra's an institution. Hope's an ambassador"

The American Worker: Works on hard wood; works on Grant Wood

workers and greeters yelp a happy recognition. The entire airport population stands up and applauds. They applaud for a long time, as you expect they might if Eisenhower had just creaked open the coffin door and come strutting through Portland. Hope, made of presidential stuff, gives a grateful wave as a matter of course.

Upstairs, there's a short press conference, and a photographer gives Hope a lobster to hold for the cameras. "It's tax-time, innit?" Hope says, with that crooked grin and his teeth showing nicely, and everybody laughs and feels good about it. It's not clear what the joke means, but there's Bob Hope in Portland, Maine, holding a lobster and saying the word "tax-time" and that ought to tickle you.

Walking fast on the balls of his feet, Bob Hope is led to his room in the Portland Holiday Inn. In a deep voice he's going "Boo-boo-bu-boo-boo-booooo" aimlessly, like a warm-up parody of Bing Crosby's singing. Bob Cole is preceding him and fumbling with the door latch; Hope is itchy to get in, he wants to keep moving, like a car in winter trying to avoid idling. The door opens. *This* is where Hope is staying? Two double beds, strictly tired-businessman habitat. "Hope judged success on vaudeville terms," Mort Lachman had said. "Even after he had the number-one show on radio and was huge in the movies, he kept the old values. He could go on and be himself: no funny shoes, no costumes, no amazements, no dogs, no seals, no seven brothers. He's the last of the vaudeville aristocrats. That's why he loves the road so much. He likes motion. He likes planes, cars, walking. He likes to sleep late, go to bed late. That's the vaudeville lifestyle. A vaudevillian's life started after the show; then the next morning—coffee at 11, phone calls until one. It's the vaudevillian aristocratic lifestyle. Watch him sometime when he's in a motel. If it's nice, he'll be happy; that means *class*."

Hope, testy, drops his suitcase on one of the beds, opens it, and asks Bob Cole if there's another bedroom or "is this it?" It had better not be. For a horrible moment Bob Cole forgets that he's arranged for a two-room suite, and the ghost of nausea flits over his face, leaving a green shadow. An instant and he remembers. "*NO*!" he says. He opens one of the doors and, thanks gosh, there's a nice dining room with a Garden of Eden fruit bowl and a bar. Bob Hope sweeps open the curtains in the Holiday Inn, revealing magnificent Casco Bay. An oil tanker floats silently outside. Hope smiles at the view.

Three hours later, and a rehearsal has passed, during which Hope has taken charge of the entire show. "Ward! What's a funny name?" Hope yells through the door to his assistant. Ward Grant, who resembles Captain Kangaroo reading for the part of Ed McMahon, is fumbling with a fat-nosed magic marker, squeaking the cue cards into legibility. Grant does everything: travels with the boss, buffers him, moves the luggage. He lives a block-and-a-half from Hope in North Hollywood and is always on call to act on Hope's endless demands, which he seems to absorb like a foam-rubber sculpture. "It's indecent," Mort Lachman said once, "that men who worry that little should exist." In the Don Wilson/McMahon tradition, Ward is allowed to be insubordinately funny: He makes a mock grimace at Hope's request. "Funny name?" he asks. "In Maine, where do they have the big mill here . . . you know," Hope demands. Ward calls the motel operator. "Honey—where's the big ugly paper mill around here—you know. And what's the name of the river outside?" The operator knows the name of the river (Androscoggin, she says), but not of the mill. "I think it's Lewiston," Ward says. "Find out," Hope says, locking his big cuff links. Two kids with Instamatics are hovering outside the open door; it's their third picture of Hope that day. "Sure, come on in," Hope says. He fixes a look into the flashbulbs, then flips through the idiot cards, throws out four jokes, reads the rest quickly aloud. "Boo-boo bu-boo-ba-boo," Hope sings to himself. "What time's it? Lezgo." Ward is puffing into his jacket. "What's the city?" Hope says. "Lewiston." Hope boo-bu-boos away, chased by Ward and his giant deck of cue cards.

Hope's conception of an un-Copernican universe with himself as center is legendary. In the early radio days, he was known to have folded his writers' checks into paper airplanes and sailed them down his mansion's stairs to the waiting recipients on the landing below. The oblivious phone calls at uncharted hours of the night and morning are cited over and over by writers who never otherwise heard from him. "I'll tell you a story to show you how great he is and how self-involved he is in one shot," Sherwood Schwartz had said. "When I was a kid first working for Hope, my main job was to get him ice cream. Hope loves ice cream, can eat a pint at a time. He'd just sit there and never offer anybody else any—just eat the whole pint himself. Anyhow, there I was, a kid, and I'd say, 'Bob, need another monologue joke?' And he'd say, 'No, but I could sure use a pineapple sundae.' Well, there I was writing jokes and getting him pineapple sundaes and one day I was drafted into the armed forces. I decided to go in, even though Bob offered to pull strings and get me declared special exemption or something, and I went into the Radio Service. Well, I was off the show for two years—*two years later*—and I was on assignment in New York and I learned that the Bob Hope Show was in New York, rehearsing for an Army show at NBC studios. So, I went to a drugstore near Rock-

Photographs from top: Larry Barbier, Jr./Globe Photos; Douglas Kirkland/Contact

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"In California homosexuality is legal. I'm getting out before they make it mandatory." Roar

Appendage of Power: Mrs. Khrushchev's Hollywood escort (1959); with the President (1973); with the President (1975); with the President (1978); with two fiscal conservatives (1978)

efeller Center, bought a pineapple sundae, vanilla ice cream, no whipped cream—remember he hadn't seen me for two years—and walked into the room where they were rehearsing. I tapped Bob on the shoulder and I said to him, 'Here's your pineapple sundae.' And without blinking or saying anything else or smiling, he just looked up and said, 'What took you so long?'"

Hope disappears into the elevator and Bob Cole shows up. He looks so tense you'd think he was John Travolta's zipper. He looks so tense you'd think he was the supporting string in Charo's costume. He looks so tense . . . "Where's Mr. Hope!" he says. "I've got a show to put on!" He looks so tense you'd think he was Dolly Parton's girdle. "What does he think, I've got all night?" He looks so tense you'd think he was Henry Kissinger's travel agent. "In the car!" He runs so fast you'd think he was O. J. Simpson's advance man. He looks so unhappy you'd think he was Tongsun Park's congressional liaison.

Bob Cole finally finds Bob Hope. Hope's sitting in the front seat of the maroon Buick that will take him to Portland's civic center. He's holding a rectangular piece of paper, staring at it for five, ten, fifteen seconds—oblivious to Bob Cole's approach. Bob Cole shoots around the car and, in one motion, opens the door and starts the engine, unacknowledged by Hope, who is still staring at the piece of paper. On closer sight it seems to be a check. It *is* a check. He stares and stares.

"Now lookit," Bob Cole says to Bob Hope. "We're running late, so I think maybe you should come out, introduce the singer, and then let her do her numbers before you come back on." Bob Cole, it seems, is hyped up by power and pressure, and is full of beans enough to give Bob Hope recommendations. His advice does not go over big. "No no no no no no," says Hope. "I been in this binness a few years y'know Bob. D'you mind—so please don't tell me. They want all of me"—he catches the egotism—"D'ja hear that? All of me, ha! Anybody wanna push the ejector seat button?" "I will," Ward offers. "When I come out," Hope says, "I can't just do *chickenshit*, Bob. They won't *buy* chickenshit from me." Hope has freckles on the bald spot on the back of his head. "I've got to give 'em everything I've got, see, or it won't work. They'll resent it." The neck hairs that feather against the back of Hope's collar are white and fluffy. "I come out, see, and I do my standard topical stuff, see Bob, and then that gives 'em some good laughs, see?" Bob Cole agrees, with the enthusiasm of a bank guard handing over the gun to Clyde Barrow. "And then I introduce the girl, do a number with her, she sings a couple of numbers, and then I come out and kill 'em. That's when I go to work. With no cards. See Bob?" Bob Cole makes a face so stern you'd think he wasn't in a car with Bob Hope.

"Oh God, he's coming on!" an older woman in the front row of the Civic Center squeals. Her friend, an even older woman, is in a different kind of ecstasy, getting a grim lift from watching Ward Grant set up Hope's cue cards. She has that so-you've-come-home-pregnant-I-knew-you-were-a-tramp-all-along smile on her face. "Cue cards," she says. The house is two-thirds full.

Bob Cole takes the stage and, bouncing his palms together, gives the Bob Hope Introduction while the place is on its pegs screaming. Hope glides out. "Loved that introduction," he says. "Loved every hour of it." He breaks into the song he sings at every stop with every band: "This is my favorite city . . . PORTLAND is my favorite town . . . " Then the jokes, drawn from the YWCA file in the Burbank vault. "I belonged to the YWCA until my voice changed . . ." Shooting through the cards, big laughs, little laughs, and then a Canal joke or two. Hope shades his eyes with his palm. "How many people here are in favor of ratifying the Canal treaty?" There's a scattered flapping of hands. "How many are against it?" Suddenly the arena is filled with thousands of Teddy Roosevelts: "YOW!" They shoot out of their seats and roar.

Hope says that he'd been doing Anita Bryant jokes, but Texaco (his sponsor) made him stop, since "people were tearing up their credit cards and sending them in. But that Anita's a nice gal. She's entitled to her position. In the Dade County election, she whipped 'em—they didn't mind *that*." Roar. "In California, homosexuality is legal. I'm getting out before they make it mandatory." Roar. Hope smiles his crooked smile.

Patricia, the singer, does a couple of numbers, and then Bob Hope comes back out to ad lib. He sizes up the crowd and digs in for all he can get. He sings and dances, does 50 or 60 jokes, bobbing and weaving, grinning, Wurlitzering his audience. He does stories, shorts, one-liners, and after each wave of laughter he triumphantly snarls, "Take that!" Moving into the jokes about the drunken grasshopper and the Polish pirate, Bob Hope looks like the happiest man in the world. He's a hit in Portland.

He decelerates. "Do you know what a great country this is? I don't like to get serious," he says, as the dark house waits in silence. "But let me just say: Never lose that free enterprise system. It's great. It's opportunity. If you don't believe it, look at me." Hope is peering out, squinty-eyed. "A guy asked me today whether I'm thinking of retiring. As long as I feel this good and you're this good, I'll never retire. I've got everything I want, and all because . . ." Silence, pause, Hope waits. "And all because I saw the president of NBC coming out of that

Photographs from top: Bill Ray/Black Star, Curt Gunther/Camera 5, Dennis Brack/Black Star, Arthur Grace/Sygma, Karin Vismara/Black Star

"I like Johnny Carson. And I like that kid Steve Martin. But you know who really cracks me up? Shecky Greene"

motel." Delighted roar. Blackout.

Hope finally looks tired. He's allowed. His age is so little in evidence that one almost never thinks of it, but he does. A few days before, I'd asked Hope why he never played the leading man in his pictures, why he'd always play a sexually frustrated fast-talker. Somehow this pricked and offended him. "I *was* a leading man in my pictures," he said, his tone defending his virility. "I got the girl in *all of my pictures*. Only in the *Road* pictures did I give up the girls and that's 'cause I was playing with Crosby." Suddenly his voice became light and jocular, as though he was doing a radio banter about Crosby. "Y'know, we'd always give the girls to Dad in the *Road* pictures, because being the older one he was the senior partner and we didn't know how much longer he had." The cold crystals quickly gathered as he realized things had changed; the conversation froze. "I guess that doesn't sound too good now that Bing's gone, does it," he said very softly.

It's late. Hope has come home to face endless old friends and autograph-hungry motel workers. He can't seem to stop, any more than he can keep from obliging the endless stream that leaves him no privacy. It's the way he wants it; he is the free enterprise system run wild, off its leash, earning and working, working and earning, until every dividend and achievement has been reaped from the energy of a lifetime.

He calls up one of his writers and leans deeply back in the Holiday Inn sofa. He wants "the Dallas stuff. Gimme the Dallas stuff." Here it comes. He puts one old hand over his closed eyes and holds the phone with the other. "Yeah. Good. Okay. Good. No, that one stinks. You tried it on me a year ago and I don't want to hear it again. Good. Yeah. Good. Hm-hm. Eeeee-heeee-heeee! Eeeee-heeee-heeeee! Very good! That's terrific. Nope. Nope. Nope. Okay. Doncha have anything else on decorators? No, that's no good. Yeah. Ye-ah! Better! Okay, well call me back later in the night. Yeah, later *tonight*. I'm flying to Dallas first thing. Okay. Okay. Uh-huh." Bang.

"God I love that." Hope says. "I love doing that show. I feel *great*. I *love* doing that show. It's just as exciting for me to get on stage now as it was when I did *Ballyhoo of 1932*.

"Whatta feeling when I first came to New York and walked down Broadway! I'd go walking onto that stage in some theater and rip 'em—and then come walking off that stage and the adrenaline would be pumping and it's still pumping!" He hops up and goes to his suitcase, pulls a jar of Kava from it, mixes it with hot milk. "They ask me when I'm gonna retire, I'm not gonna retire. I love it. You work and work and work and then when you get home, you collapse. Take a whole day just to collapse and then you start working . . . " The phone rings. It's a writer. "You have the rest of the stuff. No, I don't want that—I've got 13,000 home and interior decorators tomorrow. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, that's the stuff! Send it on to Dallas..."

There's a bang on the door. Two policemen want autographs: to Bill and to Harry. "Never make 'em think you don't care," Hope confides. "Your time's not your own. You owe 'em. Never make them feel lousy or it'll come back to you. Everything comes back to you."

I ask Hope who he thinks is very funny. "Well, I like Johnny Carson. And I like that kid Steve Martin, he's very good. But you know who really cracks me up?" The phone rings—Hope listens to a new set of jokes, about 30 percent "yes" and the rest unusable. "Shecky Greene," he says, after he gets off the phone. "Woody Allen, Woody Allen. He likes me and he's big enough to say so. Big enough. Great enough. That meant a lot to me."

The talk goes late and later and later. Hope's grateful to the world, tells the story of his eye trouble and of finding out that he'd paid for the hospital unit that treated it. He says he wants to make the *Walter Winchell Story* for a TV movie and another *Road* picture with George Burns in the Crosby part. When I ask him to explain why his audiences love him so, he says, "That would be an immodest thing for me to talk about."

It is 2 a.m. "Time for my walk." Hope picks up a putter (his only security guard), puts it over his shoulder, cocks on his golf hat and shoots off. Every night he leaves wherever he is in the world and goes out for a long walk. He clips along, fast, past the sleeping bellhops in the Holiday Inn lobby and out onto the narrow streets of Portland.

Through working-class neighborhoods we walk, along narrow paths, through parking lots, past laundromats. Hope points out clotheslines and supermarkets with a kinetic excitement: "Things are just always changing. Lookit that lot, lookit. And those slums. They look like places I used to play around in Cleveland." Faster he walks, uphill, surveying the terrain, looking up at the cloudy sky. "Dallas in the morning," he says. "Thirteen thousand interior decorators." He pumps up the hill on the balls of his feet. "I wanna tellya," he says. "That's somethin' else."

Hope walks back through the silent lobby of the Holiday Inn. Except for the desk manager and the parking lot attendant, he seems to be the last person in the motel awake. "Mr. Hope," says the attendant, "I just want to tell you that I think you're a great man." "Good night, Mr. Hope," says the desk manager. "It's an honor to see you and have a good sleep here in Portland." There being no one left in the lobby to shake hands with, Bob Hope walks himself to the elevator, waving his golf club, Bu-boo-booing all the way, and winks. "G'night folks," he says, just before the doors close. ●

Die-Cast Icon: Hope and Crosby tried to buy *The Sunshine Boys* for the pictures—Neil Simon refused, saying it would be like putting John Wayne in *The Boys in the Band*; Hope's insensitive reaction to the sixties cemented his audience

The Comedy Hero: The South Pacific, 1944

Photograph at top: Camera 5

THE SUPREME COURT AT DELPHI

The Burger Court's Bakke decision was characteristically ambiguous, but there may be method to its muddledness

by Robert Shrum

The ancient Greeks had a court of final resort for knotty cases—the oracle at Delphi. There, in a rugged glen beneath the cliffs of Mount Parnassus, an old woman dressed in maiden's robes and sitting on a tripod would have a question put to her. She would go into a trance similar to an epileptic seizure, then spit out a garbled answer. Often, the Delphic oracle was (as her characteristic ambiguity came to be called) Delphic. When the Persians invaded Greece in 480 B.C., the oracle instructed the Greeks to put their safety in "wooden walls." Her listeners could not settle on what this meant. Some construed it to be the old wooden wall around the Acropolis in Athens—and died when the Persians burned the wall and sacked the city. Those who instead took to sea in the "wooden walls" of ships sank 200 enemy vessels at the Battle of Salamis and eventually drove the Persians back into Asia.

Americans, too, have a final oracle for difficult cases. And though the Supreme Court differs from the Delphic oracle in size and gender—and though it pur-

Illustration by Philip Burke

ports to interpret the words of a Constitution, not the will of Apollo—the Court is becoming increasingly Delphic in effect. "Everything is up in the air," says Harvard Constitutional Law Professor Laurence Tribe. "No clear legal doctrines are being established." The Court's recently concluded 1977-78 term was marked by ambiguity and confusion; fittingly, it culminated in the celebrated *Bakke* decision, which both proponents and opponents of affirmative action interpreted as vindicating their opposite views.

For only the second time ever in a major case, a lone Justice's opinion, in which none of his colleagues fully concurred, was decisive. Four Justices dissented from Lewis Powell's rejection of the Davis Medical School plan that set aside 16 out of 100 places for minority applicants; four others dissented from his apparent sanction of alternative forms of affirmative action by educational institutions receiving federal funds. Commented Powell puckishly at the start of his opinion, "I will now try to explain how we divided on this issue. It may not be self-evident." It still wasn't when he and his brethren on the bench were finished with their six separate opinions. In the first wave of comment after the decision, Chicago civil rights leader Jesse Jackson characterized it as the judicial equivalent of a Ku Klux Klan march, while National Urban League President Vernon Jordan called it "a green light" for affirmative action.

Soon, however, the confusion seemed to sort itself out and a consensus emerged as to what the Court really meant. *Newsweek* and *Time* came up with covers casting that consensus in almost identical words: "No Quotas," headlined *Newsweek*; "Quotas: No," bannered *Time*—but both added that, yes, race could be taken into account. Assuming just such guidelines, a federal judge in Chicago agreed to review his own ruling establishing racial quotas for promotions on the Chicago police force. Similarly, the commissioners of Fulton County, Georgia, postponed implementing a civil service plan that would require the hiring of a specific percentage of blacks.

But just as this consensus was settling in, the Supreme Court confounded it. Only five days after the *Bakke* decision, the Court refused to review a lower court ruling upholding hiring and promotion quotas for women and minorities at American Telephone and Telegraph. At the same time, the Justices ordered a district court to reconsider its finding that it was unconstitutional to set aside 10 percent of federal public works grants for minority contractors—a holding that appeared to be perfectly in tune with what most analysts thought they had heard from the high bench in *Bakke*.

Bakke is only the tip of an iceberg of judicial indecision

The experts could only guess at explanations for the latest example of the Court's Delphic dissonance. Maybe the Justices regarded the public works case as moot because all the contracts already had been awarded. And maybe they avoided the AT&T case because the company's hiring goals for minorities are due to expire early next year, when they will have been fully met, making that case nearly moot as well.

Or maybe, just maybe, the Court

seems confused because it *is* confused. There is no rule that the Court has to be as clear as it is supreme. The Court is not final because it is decisive; it is decisive only because it is final. And the evidence now points to a Supreme Court that can't make up its collective mind—or hold to it even when it does. Court sources report that the Justices were so indecisive about *Bakke* that they nearly postponed the case until next fall. And *Bakke* is only the tip of an iceberg of judicial indecision.

"The few Justices who have a vision are rigid and wooden about it"

Looking back over the latest term of the Court, University of Miami Law Professor Kenneth Casebeer sees "a group of Justices without majorities, a court of plurality opinions." The Court's decisions have tended to be increasingly narrow: In 40 percent of all the cases decided this term, there were three or four dissenting opinions.

A longtime observer of the Court contends that it now has little if any effective leadership. "The Justices who are very bright have no coherent constitutional vision," he says, citing moderates Byron White, John Paul Stevens and Potter Stewart, who have been swing votes in crucial cases. "And the Justices who do have a vision are rigid and wooden about it"—he cites conservative ideologue William Rehnquist—"or not intellectually powerful enough to persuade their colleagues." Stanford University constitutionalist Gerald Gunther describes the current crop of Justices as "loners . . . isolated [and] less inclined to give and take." An insider reports that they hardly talk to each other outside the Court's scheduled weekly conferences, that they tend to communicate mostly in memos.

The constant that brought some coherence to the Court for several years was the cohesion of the four Nixon Justices. In the 1973-74 term, they voted with each other three-quarters of the time. They still agreed in 67 percent of all cases last year. But this term the Nixon bloc crumbled; the justices were divided twice as often as they were united. Two of the Nixon appointees, Chief Justice Warren Burger and Associate Justice Harry Blackmun, used to be nicknamed the "Minnesota Twins" because the two men, both from the same state, nearly always voted on the same side. Blackmun was known to be insecure, uncertain that he was intellectually equal to the Supreme Court, and deferential to the Chief Justice. But this year he split with Burger more than any other Nixon appointee. In *Bakke*, Blackmun wrote an emotional dissent favoring the quota system at the Davis Medical School. Lewis Powell, who cast the critical fifth vote in favor of allowing race as at least one factor in educational admissions, was also a Nixon choice. Only two of Nixon's four men on the Court, Burger and Rehnquist, toed the conservative line in *Bakke*.

The Court, concludes University of Virginia Professor A.E. Howard, has "no overarching doctrine." Even Nixon's strict constructionists invoke precedent so selectively and override it so casually that one has to be cynical about decisions that claim to be based on it. It is easy enough to draw a picture of a closely divided Court zigzagging from one case to another with no judicial philosophy to set its direction. Or as Professor Howard has put it more politely: "They're taking cases as they come in pragmatic fashion."

Yet it is possible to detect a deeper purpose beneath the pragmatism. The Court's confusion may both mask and make palatable results which, were they mandated more directly, would engender massive popular opposition. "If there were a leader on the Court," asks Harvard's Tribe, "where could he safely lead in the current political climate?" Tribe suggests that the baroque facade of the *Bakke* opinions might leave more lasting space for affirmative action than any outright endorsement of quotas, which could well have precipitated an intense political backlash, culminating perhaps in a movement for a constitutional amendment. (Polls consistently show four- or five-to-one margins against quotas.)

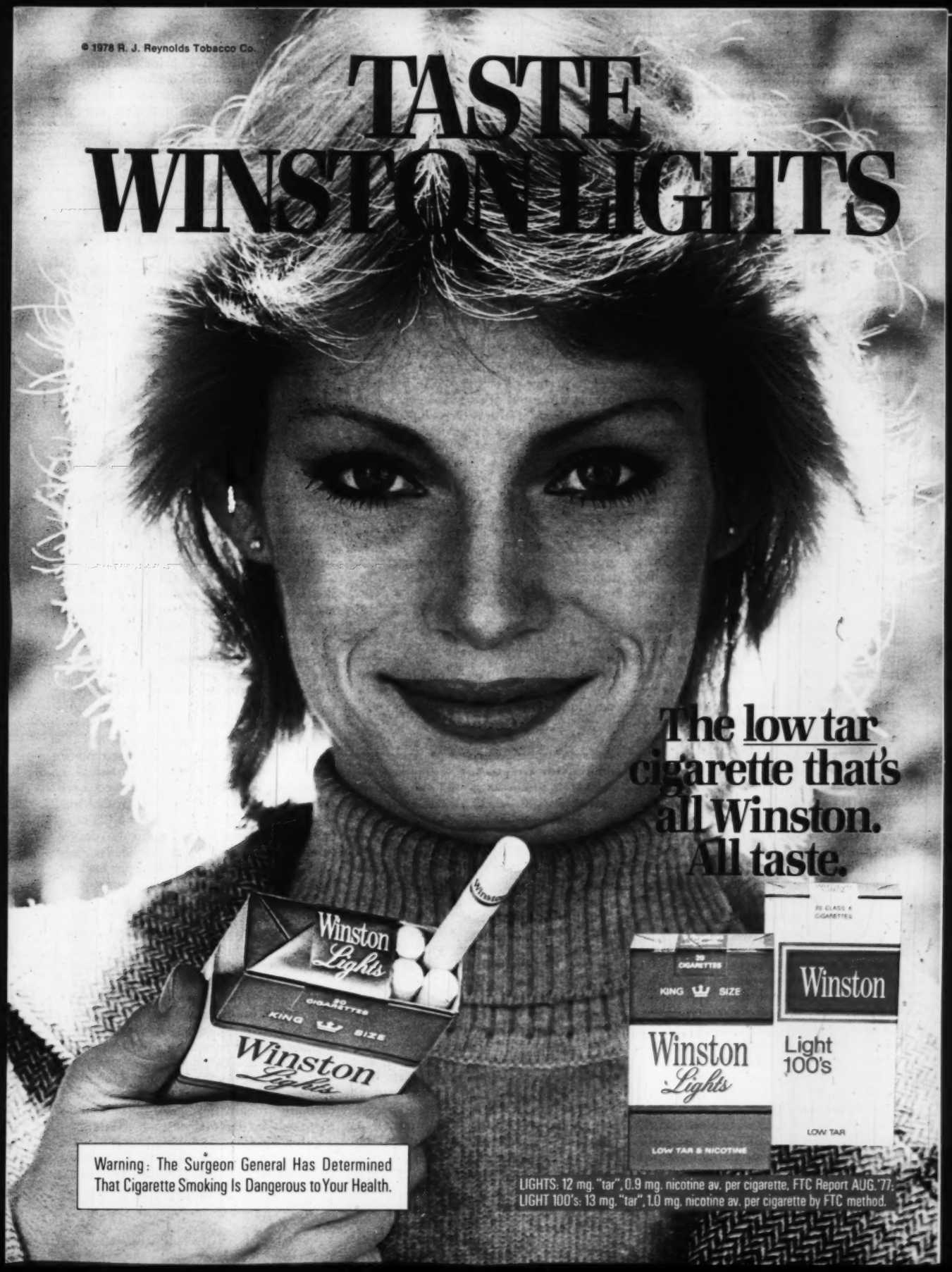
The Court, in its welter of *Bakke* opinions, actually left room for quotas. "*Time* and *Newsweek* were wrong," says Tribe. "They misread Justice Powell's opinion." While Powell disallowed quotas at the Davis Medical School, he did so only vis-à-vis the particular facts and arguments in the case. He implied, for example, that promoting better health care for minorities could justify a medical school quota, but said that the university had not demonstrated "that it must prefer members of particular ethnic groups in order to achieve that purpose." At several points in his opinion, Powell contemplated other purposes and processes that might justify a "racial classification": for instance, if an appropriate judicial, legislative or administrative agency found it necessary to remedy "identified discrimination."

The press also misread Justice Stevens' minority opinion holding racial considerations invalid, not constitutionally but because the 1964 Civil Rights Act forbids institutions receiving federal aid to discriminate "on ground of race." Stevens, one knowledgeable source believes, would permit quotas in certain cases involving private corporations. "He certainly left the possibility open," says Tribe. "In some situations, there will be five, and maybe six, Justices willing to uphold racial preferences."

The contrary message conveyed by the media is partly the Court's own fault—but also perhaps partly what it intends. The legitimacy of all government authority has diminished since the 1960s, and the Court itself is not as supreme as it was in the Warren era; it cannot simply command any end it wishes. Today, it may more effectively secure a controversial result not by explicitly ordering it but by working it out in apparent ambiguities. Would the Justices do so consciously? No more than a president would use the White House for campaign purposes. Historically, the Court has taken account of political realities; but it is not, and it never has been, ready to articulate them openly as a rationale. This year, however, despite their often differing perspectives on the merits of cases, Justices Blackmun and Rehnquist agreed in a public statement that the Court "was hiding in a judicial storm cellar" to avoid controversy.

The Court learned the virtues of hiding when it voted in 1973 to legalize abortion in the first trimester of pregnancy in *Roe* v. *Wade*. A legal expert closely allied with the women's movement now wonders if the decision was counterproductive because it went too far. "When the Court denied that a fetus was human," the expert says, "when it wrote a medical dictionary and set very detailed standards, the effect was to coalesce opposition to the decision. The Court waved a red flag when it could have approximated the same result more subtly. It might have said that the states couldn't arbitrarily ban all abortions even in early pregnancy. But the country just wasn't ready for a clear statement that a fetus wasn't a person." Since then, the backlash has led Congress to deny funds for abortions for poor women. And when the issue reached the Supreme Court, it backed down, too, leaving the poor with a constitutional right but no resources to exercise it. The abortion decision, a women's rights activist concedes, also contributed to anti-E.R.A. sentiment: "We might have passed the Equal Rights Amendment by now if the decision hadn't sparked a right-wing movement on all women's issues."

Since *Roe*, the Court has been both less clear—and less controversial. *Bakke* followed the pattern of sensitive cases in which the Justices sputtered their way to far-reaching conclusions. Although the Court has held capital punishment constitutional, since 1967 not one person sentenced to death in the United States has actually been executed except Gary Gilmore, who fought to get himself before a firing squad. A confusing succes-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TASTE
WINSTON LIGHTS
The low tar cigarette that's all Winston. All taste.
Winston Lights
20 CIGARETTES
KING SIZE
Winston Lights
Winston
Light 100's
LOW TAR
LOW TAR & NICOTINE
Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.
LIGHTS: 12 mg. "tar", 0.9 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report AUG. '77.
LIGHT 100's: 13 mg. "tar", 1.0 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

sion of Supreme Court decisions has blocked the death penalty without arousing the popular reaction that definitive abolition surely would. "The signals from this Court," Chief Justice Burger recently acknowledged, "have not . . . always been easy to decipher."

In *Furman* v. *Georgia* (1972), the Court ruled that judges and juries could not be left with the discretion to impose a death penalty without specific statutory standards. The prisoners then on death row were all spared. Subsequently, several states quickly passed laws making the death sentence mandatory for certain crimes. But, four years after *Furman*, in *Woodson* v. *North Carolina*, the Court invalidated this approach, declaring that defendants had to be treated "as uniquely individual human beings . . . [not] as members of a faceless, undifferentiated mass." In short, there has to be some discretion—but not too much.

Two Justices agreed that the Court was "hiding in a judicial storm cellar"

So, once more, the states tried to draft death penalties along the increasingly fine lines drawn by the Court. But this July, the Justices declared that Ohio's statute, similar to those in 24 other states, was unconstitutional, even though it apparently had the right measure of discretion. The decision was 7 to 1, with Rehnquist dissenting, but as in *Bakke*, there was no majority opinion. Four Justices believed the Ohio statute was defective because it limited the right of a convicted defendant to introduce mitigating evidence about his character and the circumstances of the crime before a death sentence was pronounced. One Justice insisted that all capital punishment was unconstitutional. And two others had yet different rationales. The diversity is classically confusing, and it is indecisive in everything but the result: no one is being executed.

The less Delphic alternative—overt abolition—might lead to just the opposite outcome. Says a Senate Judiciary Committee aide, "If the Court abolished capital punishment, Congress would approve a constitutional amendment reinstating it and the states would ratify it. And it would probably give far wider latitude for using the death penalty than even the conservative Justices would ever allow."

This spring, with similar finesse, the Court muddled its way through *Marshall* v. *Barlow's, Inc.*, in which a private employer was challenging the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) practice of inspecting work places without a warrant. The practice enraged business executives and was drawing intensifying congressional fire. Justice White's majority opinion in the OSHA case was not unmindful of this anger. Warrantless inspections, he wrote, violated the Fourth Amendment's protection against unreasonable searches. But White's opinion limited OSHA's authority mostly in theory. The agency, White ruled, could rely on an "administrative search warrant," a device almost never before known in constitutional law, and a warrant which can be had virtually for the asking.

Another aspect of the Court's purposeful confusion this term was the Justices' blurring of some of the harsher conservative lines of previous years. For half a decade, the Court had ruled against defendants in 64 percent of all criminal cases; in 1977-78, it ruled for them 55 percent of the time. Under Chief Justice Burger, there has been a steady trend toward limiting citizen access to judicial remedies. But this term, the Court widened the right of citizens to sue by overruling *Monroe* v. *Pape*, a 1961 decision that made local governments and officials immune from suit for civil rights violations. With only Burger and Rehnquist dissenting, the Court held that pregnant employees of New York City's Department of Social Services and Education could recover back pay after they were compelled to take unpaid medical leaves of absence four months before their babies were due.

Professor Tribe concludes that "the Court is trying to leave open the possibilities for progress in a divided nation. It is attempting pragmatic statecraft in the absence of a liberal consensus." In a number of important cases, that pragmatism is bringing liberal results, if not full-blown liberal opinions. Yet Tribe also observes that in constitutional law, as in politics, ". . . defining what is liberal and what is conservative is becoming very difficult. The traditional categories are becoming irrelevant to the real issues." Thus, in *First National Bank of Boston* v. *Belloti* this year, the Court found a constitutional right for corporations to spend corporate funds in a state referendum campaign. The reasoning—that speech is protected no matter what its source—seems liberal. The result—that the superior resources of business might dominate the electoral process—seems conservative. Yet the Court's archconservative, Justice Rehnquist, dissented on the ground that corporations are mere creatures of the state and therefore have no rights that the state cannot rescind.

In one case this June, Chief Justice Burger was so disturbed at the "liberal" result his "conservative" principles mandated that he penned an almost plaintive peroration to his opinion for the Court. He had decided that deference to the legislative branch required an injunction against the completion of Tennessee's Tellico Dam because it would threaten the snail darter, a three-inch fish that exists only in the Little Tennessee River. Conservationists had opposed the dam before the snail darter was discovered because the dam's 30-mile-long reservoir would have destroyed one of the most beautiful stretches of river land in America. When all else failed, environmental groups turned to the snail darter, which providentially had been found and identified at the last minute, as a vehicle to stop the Tellico project under the 1973 Endangered Species Act. At the close of his opinion against the dam and for the fish, Burger invoked the lines given to Sir Thomas More by the playwright Robert Bolt: "The law, Roper, the law. I know what's legal, not what's right. And I'll stick to what's legal."

Constitutional legality is seldom so clear. Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes once wrote: "The Constitution is what the judges say it is." In 1978, the Supreme Court is making more of the Constitution than what the Justices are clearly saying. The University of Miami's Casebeer worries: "A process that publicly says we will not impose our own value judgments, but then does so through technical legal manipulation, inevitably threatens judicial credibility. It's not very different from politicians promising to cut taxes, then not doing it. Eventually, people stop believing them and you have Proposition 13."

But in today's political climate, consistently clear-cut Supreme Court decisions, especially those that echoed or amplified the Warren Court, probably would prove counterproductive. "The Court would have to take firmly reactionary positions," insists Tribe, "or it would create an overwhelming backlash." Facing the political reality of Franklin Roosevelt's court-packing bill, the Supreme Court of 1937, which had been invalidating the New Deal bill after bill, went into a sudden trance and emerged to approve legislation identical in principle to the earlier bills. "A switch in time saves nine," the realists said of the Court's shift. Coming from today's Court, ambiguity for a time may save more constructive constitutional interpretations. And equivocal answers are not necessarily unworthy ones. After all, sensible Greeks figured out that "wooden walls" meant boats, not battlements that could be downed with a few flaming arrows. Amid the Delphic phrases, decisions and revisions of the 1977-78 Supreme Court, the direction of the zigzag can be seen through the ambiguities, tentatively. ●

Dressing-up in Limbo

Often heterosexual, many of them family men, transvestites are an embarrassment to both gays and straights

by Art Levine

It was a summer Saturday night in Annandale, Virginia, and Linda Ann Stephens was late for the monthly meeting. The 6'-tall Marine Corps veteran wore billowing white slacks, a brown blouse, ruby rings and earrings—he hadn't had time to put on his wig. A few other members of the International Alliance for Male Feminism were sitting around House of Christopher Hair Salon. Linda Ann, after hanging up his suit and slipping on pumps, had to hurry with his make-up.

"My co-workers aren't aware of this," he said, heading toward the ladies' room with his cosmetics kit. Surrounded by pink wallpaper, this crew-cut Southerner, father of two, examined his sagging face in the mirror.

"I'm not all that fancy," he said as he lined up the tubes and powders. "My wife was very helpful. Before I was married, I participated in groups in Houston and Atlanta. It used to be very . . . underground. We've become more open, but not nearly as active as gays are. I wish we would be more open, but in some cases we're talking about people losing their jobs." Linda Ann works in a major government agency.

He reached for a jar of white ointment, put some on his fingers and spread it on his face. "This is Clown White. It's good for beard cover," he said in a soft twang. "I'd love to have electrolysis. That's the most common form of operation most of our members have. It's very expensive, a couple of thousand dollars. What I may try to do is buy a new machine for $500 and have my wife do it."

"What's the attraction of dressing up?" I asked.

"I enjoy being a woman, I feel more relaxed," he said. "I enjoy expressing the feminine side of my personality.

There's a considerable difference between sex and gender, and I have no desire to change sex. But I do have a desire to live as a woman."

Linda Ann grabbed a stick of flesh-colored foundation and started blending it into his skin. "You should have a tone that's similar to your natural skin color," he advised.

"I go wherever I would normally go," he continued, dabbing on rouge. "I go to restaurants, shops, movies. I have never been spotted in public. My friends don't know; my brothers and sisters, my parents, they don't know." He pouted his lips, carefully applying his Tiger Lily Orange Lipstick.

The change was almost complete, and he moved back from the mirror to admire his handiwork—a waxworks approximation of the woman he wanted to be. For moments like this, he was willing to lead a double life.

Linda Ann walked out of the ladies' room to get his wig. He took the bouffant hairpiece in his hands, bent over, lowering his head with solemn ritual precision, and slipped the dirty-blond wig over his hair. With the final addition of wing-tipped glasses, the transformation was complete. He looked like a tall, rather frumpy, middle-aged woman.

"I don't like the term transvestite," he said. "There's a whole lot more to being a woman than just clothes."

Indeed there is; and for Linda Ann and the other men in that Virginia hair salon, the quest for a part-time, elusive femininity has consumed most of their lives. They are part of a unique sexual minority that has somehow managed to escape the media attention given to homosexuals and transsexuals.

All sexual outlaws stir currents of fear and mistrust, but transvestites are in a special no-man's-land of their own. Often heterosexual, they are an embarrassment to both straights and gays, in part because of their desire to dress as women while living as family men.

They establish for themselves distinct male and female identities, with separate names, personalities and wardrobes. And while their sexual conduct might be classified as "normal," many of them cannot become aroused unless they at least fantasize that they are wearing women's clothes. Gender identity experts at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore speculate that the disorder is caused by conflicting parental demands in childhood, but no one is really sure. Compulsive cross-dressing is, above all, a purely male phenomenon, the only psychosexual disorder with that distinction. Classified as psychologically disturbed, transvestites live lives of quiet normality —except for the urge to dress up and the attendant emotions of guilt and loneliness. Emotions that spring from ignorance, confusion and their sense of isolation.

How many of them are there, anyway? There are no reliable estimates—Cross-dressing is not the kind of information one volunteers to census takers or pollsters, although transvestites

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Photographs by Michael McCarthy

themselves say there are up to 18 million in this country. Hundreds attend secret drag conventions on both coasts, and one transvestite clothing store in New York City has 60,000 people on its mailing list. There are magazines, directories, clubs. The Maryland-based International Alliance—the country's leading heterosexual drag group—has 600 dues-paying members around the country and publishes a bi-monthly newsletter, the *Journal of Male Feminism* (formerly *Hose and Heel*). The group also has a 24-hour helpline (301-776-TVDC) and runs a counseling and referral service. The Washington area, which is in some ways transvestite national headquarters, also has several successful clubs catering to gay drag queens. And the D.C.-Baltimore branch of the International Alliance (founded in 1960 under a different name) has 100 members, plus contacts with 500 others. Identities are protected by a network of secret meeting places, code numbers and mail drops.

On that night in Virginia, however, only 10 members were present, including a few transsexuals. "The summer is a bad time," Linda Ann explained later. "There are vacation schedules, hassles with the kids, and we have more problems with shaving our legs."

The gathering was an odd mix—slinky foxes in clinging black gowns talking to artificial matrons with fake pearls around their necks. The effect, at first, was unsettling. A few of the men, pre-operation transsexuals on hormones, seemed like the genuine article—smooth skin, graceful gestures, feminine ease. But others looked badly put together, stubble and rough skin buried under layers of make-up. Faces powdered and rouged, seemed frozen, out of place atop broad shoulders, skin too porous beneath the creams. Hairy arms stuck out from the sleeves of their blouses. Their manner was stiff. Thick legs and hard bodies were swathed in soft fabrics. Several looked like extras from a Monty Python skit on English biddies.

The mood was curiously sedate, like an afternoon tea for elderly women. The men's energies seemed drained by the laborious process of dressing. If this was sin, it was of a peculiarly denatured kind, mute and joyless. There was none of the swagger and flash one associates with drag queens, high-struttin' mamas sashaying in glitter gowns, yoo-hooing to baffled straights. But those are *homosexual* drag queens, these transvestites were quick to point out, gay men who dress up to attract other men.

"Yeah, I have three kids," Julie said, playing with the pearls draped around the front of his blue polyester dress. "I had a guilt syndrome for a long time. Every psychology text that I read when I started this told me I was a homosexual. I knew better. I knew what my sexual preference was.

"I did all the sports," he added, tilting his head to the side, Brando-style. "My nose got this way playing football," he gestured with his thumb. "I also boxed."

He was 45, and he only recently tried to meet others like himself. Before that, he donned his secret wardrobe on business trips—in hotel rooms, after the door was locked and the shades drawn. There was an erotic charge to placing forbidden fabric against skin. With the wig and dress and make-up in place, a certain calm settled over him. His wife never knew.

It started in his family's home in Chicago. "I was raised with girls, with no consistent male model. When I was seven or eight years old I didn't know whether I was a boy or a girl. We used to play up in the attic, and I found a lot of old nylon stockings up there. I felt, boy, I wonder what it feels like to put those on? I was around 12, and I was hooked from there on in."

After all these years, he was still afraid to venture out in public. "I don't have that confidence," he said. "There's no point in making a fool of yourself."

No point in making a fool of yourself. It is the central fear of their lives. When it happens in public, they call it being "read," spotted as a man. The tip-off might be the voice, or some awkward gesture noticed in a ladies' room. Some places, not including Maryland and Washington, D.C., have laws banning cross-dressing, so there is always the threat of arrest.

The fear gives an edge of excitement

that heightens the senses, like a soldier's crawl through enemy territory. But here at the meeting, it translated into wariness, an instinctive retreat. These men had only recently been able to construct for themselves a fragile sense of self-respect, and a stranger could shatter all their defenses by simply saying, "Hey, fellas, aren't you being silly?"

For a novice like Barbara, a 27-year-old steelworker, this sensitivity was especially apparent. His dress was draped awkwardly over a tall frame, a cheap wig cascaded over a thin, farmboy face, badly made up.

"I don't want to be ridiculed," he said, hunching over as he drew a cigarette to his lips. His hands trembled. "I'd like to be able to be in a female role, but if people will laugh at me when I walk down the street, well . . . "

It was the first time he had ever dressed up in front of others, although he had been doing it privately since he was 14. "It was something I needed to do," he said. "I wanted to be with my own kind. It's better than talking to therapists." He had driven all the way from Pittsburgh, where he had tried, without success, to form a local chapter of the International Alliance. "I plan, someday, to be able to go out in public."

One of the members, though, looked as if he could easily pass in public. He sat off to one side, dark-haired, quiet, wearing a name tag that read, "HELLO: MY NAME IS ANN." He had pencilled eyebrows, soft skin, delicate features—a perfect job.

"Is Ann a woman or a man?" I asked a transsexual named Carol Anne.

"She's a GG," Carol Anne said. "We talk about TVs, TSs and GGs. TVs are transvestites, TSs are transsexuals and a GG is a genetic girl." She giggled.

Ann turned to me. "I'm here with my husband." She pointed to a tired, glum man in a pink dress."LYNN,"the tag said.

His voice was a shock. It was the flat, back-country twang of Maryland's Eastern Shore, where he worked as a plant foreman.

"I have felt so guilty," he said, looking away. "I saw two psychiatrists. I was in the hospital for two weeks, where they gave me drugs to try to shock it out of me. I've burnt my clothes, I've hid them in the attic, but I can't go on without it." He turned and looked at me. "I don't feel as guilty now," he said. "I'm a human being."

Lynn was reluctant to talk further. He joined the other men in the salon who were watching Carol Anne receive a styling from one of the hairdressers. While her husband sat on a couch with his legs crossed underneath a skirt, Ann talked about their life.

"I found out a year after we were married," she said. "I work late, and I got off early one day and he was sitting there in his skirt and sweater, doing the bills. I was really upset. My first reaction was that we should go our separate ways. I couldn't accept it."

She continued with a new softness in her voice. "He proved to me that he wasn't gay or anything. He doesn't hurt anybody. He doesn't go out in public or entice somebody else. He's a good worker. I have a daughter by a previous marriage; he's been as good as gold to her.

"Both of us discussed not having children in our marriage, and we try to prevent it. Thank goodness we don't have kids!" she added with a nervous giggle, but caught herself quickly. "I . . . I guess I shouldn't have said that.

"He's really a wonderful husband. But how could he be such a man and want to be like *this*?"

Like the other wives I would meet, she valued her husband for the most traditional reasons: He was a good provider, kind to the kids, considerate. While their husbands were playing fast and loose with gender barriers, the wives held tight to old-fashioned values, trying to keep the home together by being supportive. Wives are encouraged to become active members of the International Alliance, and many help their husbands choose clothes and make-up. For some, the wrenching admission of cross-dressing is followed by a closer relationship, and the man feels free to show an interest in the domestic details of his wife's existence.

The irony is that these men are, at heart, chauvinists of the most profound sort. As a group, the Alliance pays lipservice to women's liberation. But in their marriages, the men and their wives each have their own narrow roles.

Dr. Tom Mazur, a psychologist who has worked for the John Hopkins gender identity clinic, said, "They act out the stereotypes." Dr. Paul Walker, director of the University of Texas at Galveston gender clinic, suggests that cross-dressing might decline in the future as sex roles become less defined. But for now, the transvestite upholds tradition.

The irony is that these men are, at heart, chauvinists of the most profound sort

"A woman should be on a pedestal," said Jeannette, a 28-year old engineer who looked elegant in a low-cut black gown, his high cheekbones rouged to perfection. "When you go from the male role to the female role," he explained, "something's taken off your shoulder. The female has less responsibilities. A man is put here to support women. I'm not for women's lib."

A view of the life he wants to lead came in a slide show promoting a transvestite convention, "Dream '76." On the screen, a blond posed in front of a cozy fireplace. "Just how many times have you been dressed up with no place to go?" the narrator asked.

The photographs of transvestites smiling at parties, feasting in banquet halls, gathering in classes flashed before them. Soft music played, and the audience was invited to come along and live a week *en femme*, free to act out their fantasies in a whirl of activities.

"Sounds good, doesn't it?" the salesman continued. "The only restriction is on far-out activities. At Dream, you'll be expected to dress and act like a lady."

The lights went on in the hair salon and there was a moment of silence. "I've heard," someone finally said, "that it's worth everything you have to pay for it."

A few strange men wandered into the room, adding to my confusion, although no one paid them any unusual attention. One man, in light blue pants and a dark polo shirt, came up to me, smiling, with a beer can in his hand.

"I bet you don't recognize me," he said.

"No, I don't," I said.

"I'm Julie. This is the way I look when I'm Joe."

His smile hinted of menace, or cordiality, or some sour self-knowledge. I could never really know.

Moments later the men filtered out into the parking lot, some in drag, others in street clothes. Linda Ann stood near his car, still wearing his women's clothes, talking to the Pittsburgh steelworker, who had gone from Daniel to Barbara. And here he was back again—homely, short-haired, shy. He did not look happy. "I have a nervous condition," he said. "I'm under a lot of stress."

When he went to bed that night, Linda Ann made sure his two children were asleep before slipping on his panties and nightgown. His oldest daughter, six, used to be allowed to see her father dressing up, but that ended when she began talking a bit too freely about daddy's dress and daddy's slip.

His wife, Jane, had been keeping the secret for seven years. He was serving overseas when he told her, six months into the marriage. He had built up to the revelation so dramatically that she was relieved. Later came the hard work of adjusting. Today, he considers her a supportive wife.

He is not sure what led him to become a transvestite. "I had two brothers—and a very strong father," he said. His wife pointed out that his mother always wanted to have a daughter. But she is still bewildered. "I know when we were going together, I saw no sign of fem-

inism," she said. "He had been in the Marine Corps, played sports in school and everything."

The experts are equally confused. "It might be an interaction between some prenatal condition and the environment in the home," Dr. Mazur said. Dr. Eileen Higham, a Baltimore psychologist who counsels some transvestites, said, "One's sense of gender identity is imprinted early in life, around the time that language emerges. Your parents can give you conflicting messages, or the loss of an important person can play a part. But you can't look for universals.

"You start out feeling that you're the only person in the world like this," Linda Ann said. It was especially rough during the six months he spent in the Marine Corps. "If for some reason I'm denied an opportunity to spend some time as a woman—like in the Marines—you just climb the wall."

Now Linda Ann presents to the world the face of one who has achieved a measure of self-respect, even pride. "I don't have any shame or guilt feelings," he said. "I'm proud I'm a male woman."

Pride is difficult to acquire, but the effort to do so is everywhere. It shows in the choice of alternative words: transgenderist, male woman, eonist (after Chevalier d'Eeon, a transvestite diplomat in the court of Louis XV), even femmiphile—lover of the feminine. The slogan "We Are Proud We Are Heterosexual Male Femmiphiles" is emblazoned at the top of the newsletter, and the very name of the organization—International Alliance—has an authoritative ring, redolent of comrades-in-arms and stout good fellowship.

The Alliance reflects, in fact, nothing so much as a faith in the wholesome benefits of group activity; transvestites have found that private sorrows can be eased by meeting like-minded people, making friends and sharing problems. Linda Ann's group hosts guest speakers, holds picnics, provides information—not that different from the activities of the local fraternal lodge.

But there are differences, of course. Transvestites have taken only a timid half-step out of the closet; they are willing to go on talk shows in drag, but are not ready to tell their employers. There are no public figures who have acknowledged that they are transvestites, except for some female impersonators. There are a few professional TVs—author Virginia Prince and lecturer Ariadne Kane—but their masculine identities are hidden from view.

"It's pretty hard to be proud of being a male woman," Linda Ann admitted. At times, it seems that all their activities are no more than hollow gestures, delaying a final surrender to their own bleakest view of themselves. Even their literature, touting the joys of cross-dressing, belies a hard struggle for self-acceptance. In the instructional book *How To Be A Woman Though Male*, Virginia Prince outlines the details of behavior, dress and cosmetics that enable the would-be transvestite go out in public. Everything about the male body is wrong: too large, hairy, muscular, awkward. So Prince explains "what, if anything, can be done to obscure these male

In trying to make cross-dressing respectable, they had succeeded in making it dull

'leftovers.'" Hands should be stilled, voices lowered, genitals tucked away. A realistic cleavage can be created with tape; broad shoulders can be disguised with high-necked blouses and chiffon scarves. But even then they might not get it right. In those tiresome hours spent in transformation, a certain weary anger at their own masculinity must surely take its toll. But the worst part, the confusing, soul-wrenching part, is that these men also enjoy the pleasure they glean from their male bodies. Unlike transsexuals, Dr. Mazur pointed out, "The transvestite knows that the seat of his erotic pleasure is his penis."

But once in women's clothes, they try their best, at least in public, to act the part. So Virginia Prince urges them to carefully study feminine behavior, as if by the steady accumulation of detail, a connect-the-dots approach to conduct, they could turn themselves into women.

"Try to be more gentle, more graceful in your movements," Prince warns, be "passive, obedient [and] self-effacing with men."

Having taken such pains to make himself over, the transvestite often returns from the journey urging others to do the same. "If you spend a weekend as a woman," Linda Ann told me, "I'd think you'd want to spend some time as a woman from now on." It is, in many ways, a necessary belief.

With summer nearly over, they came to the Eastern Shore for a celebration of sorts. It was a fancy spread, hosted by a businessman and his wife. While their husbands gathered in the shade, wearing skirts, the wives sat by a table near the pool, munching cheese dip and talking quietly.

The teenage daughter of the host sat soaking up the sun in a bathing suit. "Whatever he wants to do, he can do," she said of her father. "I don't care."

"As long as it doesn't hurt you, right?" asked Ann, the foreman's wife.

"Yeah, my father's a good guy, you know. I love him, so it really doesn't make much difference."

She looked toward the house. "Here's my dad," she said.

A broad-shouldered man in a pink short-sleeved blouse came out on the lawn, wearing no wig, his face deeply tanned by the sun. He called himself Phyllis. He had an athletic walk, and the good-natured confidence of one who had spent hundreds of hours sailing. But he would never *pass* in public.

The women slowly turned their heads to look, their faces impassive. Phyllis' wife said nothing. Then the women turned back to face each other, while music from a transistor covered the momentary lull.

"Did you ever think of leaving your husband?" I asked Sue, the wife of a government worker. She was younger than the others, and as she smoked, her lips curled into a slight, almost imperceptible sneer.

"I come from a very moralistic background," she said. "In my particular religion, when you marry a man, you stay with him. And there's the children. I look at it that it could be a whole lot worse."

Linda Ann's wife nodded in agreement. "The person could be a gambler, a womanizer, there are so many things. I mean, he could be an alcoholic, an actual *homosexual* . . . "

The litany was almost complete, recited not to justify themselves, or even to exchange opinions. It was as if the repetition of logic would be enough to convince each woman that she had not made a mistake.

"Who knows what you're going to get when you get married?" Jane added. "He took a chance on me, I took a chance on him. It was just that I didn't quite expect *that*."

"I look at it this way," Jane said. "I know it's stronger than a hobby, but, you know, there are worse ways to spend your time."

Up at the house, a few of the men were changing into women's swimsuits, their legs already shaved, their wigs protected by flowered bathing caps.

"My husband's tried," Ann sighed. "He's kept it up since he was little, so how can you get it out of his mind? It's just there, who's to fight it?" The others fell silent for a moment, their good cheer beginning to fade.

Mary spoke up. "I sort of tried to fight."

The other wives looked at her. "But it's so strong an impulse for them, it's a necessity. It's just like a drive."

She went on in a calm, resigned voice. "I learned about it when we were married for three months. We thought he was the only one like that. I think my reaction was sort of sympathetic. There are things that bothered me about it, but

we'll work it out together."

"Do your husbands, uh, you know, like to have sex dressed up?" I asked.

A burst of nervous laughter went up from the group. "They do," Mary said, "but we don't."

"No way," Jane said. "If I wanted that, I would have been a lesbian."

Mary said, "My husband would like to do that, but I won't allow it."

"Right!" Jane said.

"He can wear it to the moon for all I care. When he goes in the casket he can be all dressed up, but I just don't think. . . ." Mary let the thought go unsaid. "He's changed," she added. "Today was a big race, and all these years nothing could stop him from sailing—except this, which has become his first priority." She smiled ruefully. "Actually, when he goes sailing, he says he never thinks about dressing up."

"Have you ever thought," Jane said, "about getting a houseboat?"

It was a small joke, a tiny stiletto of resentment, but it reflected the larger tensions that became evident when Sue's husband, Cathy, joined them. Wearing a white cotton dress and black wig, he sat silently while they talked, a parody of a demure lady.

"We didn't used to consult each other on clothes," Sue said, "but I found that his taste is so horrendous that I finally stepped in. If you're going to do it, you might as well do it right."

Cathy flashed a quick smile and kicked at his wife under the table. She pretended to ignore it.

"I don't watch him make up. I think I make him nervous," she said. "Anybody makes him nervous," she added, with just the faintest trace of disdain.

Some wives, of course, do not even give the pretense of support. They were not at the picnic. They are women who broke up with their husbands after discovering it, or who were never told, or, like Carl's wife, who felt betrayed.

Carl was sweating under his short dark wig. He had only just told his wife, and he wandered around the lawn in a daze, his entire frame shaking beneath his purple dress. His adopted name was Sally Ann. Its girlish ring was totally inappropriate to this middle-aged man, whose jowls trembled in panic.

Linda Ann approached him near the pool and tried to comfort him.

"How'd she take it?" he asked.

"She didn't take it well. Just the opposite. This is the worst thing I've gone through in my whole life."

Later that evening, after the barbeque and swimming, it began to rain. Inside the porch, Sally Ann sat talking with Sue about what had happened to him. Slouching over the table, he spoke in an earnest, expectant manner. She did her best to be understanding.

"I don't see what difference it makes," he said. "A man's still just as much a man, isn't he?" She agreed. Now maybe he could begin to believe it himself.

I last saw Linda Ann in December. He was in the basement of a Maryland church, sitting before a vanity mirror in red pants, a pink slip and silver slippers, applying his lipstick. Lynn, Sally Ann and Phyllis were there too, waiting to go upstairs to join the wives. Sally Ann was wearing a brown dress and had pearls around his wrist. He looked calmer.

"My wife wanted to come, but she went to see *Swan Lake* instead," he said. "I don't care for ballet. I can't see these guys jumping around like that, it revolts me. I like to look at women, not men." After he went upstairs, the others smiled.

"She looks 100 percent better," Lynn said, "and her wife lets him dress in front of her now."

"Right on!" Linda Ann said. Sisterhood was powerful in the dressing room, but their comments seemed to be more directed at me.

The party brought out some of the old regulars, and some new people as well—a 60-year-old Jewish grandmother and her transvestite lover; an ex-All-American football player. But by now it had all ceased to shock, or even surprise. They were people just like the rest of us, really.

Much of the evening was devoted to a discussion about finding a permanent meeting place or a holiday retreat. Linda Ann chaired; and with the careful adherence to rules of order and courtesy, it might have taken place in any PTA across the land. In trying to make cross-dressing respectable, they had succeeded in making it dull.

They ended by singing Christmas carols around the piano. They stood with their wives, holding sheet music, the deep voices booming out. Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way.

Back in the dressing room, Cathy placed a suitcase on the table and began tearing at his dark wig, hurling it quickly down in front of him. Strips of tape remained on his bald pate. "Welcome to the transformation room," he said.

Lynn stood near the door in a yellow shirt and brown windbreaker, with sharp angular features and thinning hair that gave him the look of a Walker Evans photograph.

Sally Ann had changed, too. In the pitiless fluorescent light of the basement, he looked much smaller as a man, tired and aging in his oversized gray coat and battered hat. "We look better as women than we do as men," he said. Reaching for his suitcase, he turned to the others and flashed a mirthless smile: "Well, see you next year."

Then he went upstairs and headed out into the night, listing slightly like a Chaplinesque character in the final frame of a funny two-reeler. ●

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Television/by Richard M. Levine

THE MEDIUM OF RECORD FINALLY CATCHES ON

"Papers still cost ten cents, don't they? No? Gee, it's been so long since I bought one." —NBC programming chief Paul Klein at a recent gathering of TV critics

When I first started writing about television for this magazine it was easy to take the nearly universal reaction of network executives to me—pure, unadulterated hatred—personally. Even tepid lines I intended as somewhat back-handed but genuine compliments were taken as near-libelous insults. But it soon became apparent that when it came to the press in general, practically everybody in TV had skin made out of crepe paper.

Even the most eminent figures in television exhibited a marked paranoia when it came to the press. Few men in this country are more powerful and at the same time less accountable for their actions than CBS Chairman William S. Paley, who has been head of one of the world's largest communications conglomerates for nearly half a century. For several years David Halberstam has been writing a book on media empires, and 18 months ago the section on CBS appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*. Now in terms of the sheer numbers of people that television must attract, *The Atlantic Monthly*, although certainly a prestigious publication, does not have the ratings of the *Late, Late, Late Show*. And yet no sooner was his article published than Halberstam began getting detailed "fact sheets" from Paley denying the most obvious points in it with patently self-serving assertions: You say that (long-time CBS president) Frank Stanton was unhappy at being forced into retirement at 65. However, Dr. Stanton assures me. . . . That sort of thing. Moreover, CBS minions began following Halberstam around on lecture tours. One day, when he was speaking before a number of different groups at the University of Oklahoma in Tulsa, he noticed the same scruffy-looking kid taping his talk at each stop. Finally, at the end of the day the kid approached him and said: "I don't know what this is about, Mr. Halberstam, but CBS asked me to record everything you say here."

I think Paley's reaction to Halberstam's reporting illustrates one reason for television's paranoia about the press. At precisely the moment when the 76-year-old Paley (to my knowledge nobody at CBS ever suggested that *he* retire at 65) was coming to the end of a long and illustrious career and so felt the need to set the historical record straight, he realized that there *was* no historical record. It must have come as quite a shock. Print—even newsprint—has a certain permanence, speaks for the record, while television literally vanishes into thin air. The most powerful of all communications media communicates in only one tense—the present. It is a medium without a memory. This helps explain the cynicism with which most of the executives who control television today, having been raised on the older values of print, regard their profession—and their cynicism, of course, accounts for the kinds of shows they put on the air.

Cynicism may be too weak a word. At times it amounts to the kind of self-loathing that helps make Beverly Hills the home of more psychiatrists than stars. In late May, Frank Price stepped down from his job as head of Universal Television, the largest television production factory in the country. It is safe to say, however, that few Universal programs (by and large action-adventure shows such as *Kojak*, *Baretta* and *Emergency*) rank among the high points in the history of television. Now it seems to me very likely that Frank Price was able to produce them because he has very little respect for the possibilities of the medium. As a young man he had taken an interim job in television while waiting for a slot to open at the Associated Press, and he never left. "I was talking to my wife recently," he told a reporter the day he stepped down at Universal, "and I said 'If I had stuck with journalism, who knows—maybe I could have been the editor of the *New York Times* by now, doing something respectable.'"

So there is much jealousy in television's attitude toward the press, mixed with an equal measure of contempt. Whatever one may think of A.M. Rosenthal of the *New York Times*, it is difficult to imagine him waking up in the middle of the night and saying to his wife, "If I'd only stuck with television, dear, who knows, maybe one day I could have been the head of Universal Television." In fact, it is difficult to imagine him talking much about television at all. The daily *Times* still puts its television reporting far back in the paper, not out of pique that television has stolen away its readers but because it still doesn't recognize how important a story TV is in the life of the nation.

A couple of months ago I had lunch with Norman Lear, who does know how important a story television is and loudly bemoans the fact that TV coverage in most papers does not go much beyond reporting the latest ratings and reviewing after the fact the current episode of *Happy Days*, this week entitled "Potsie Gets Pinned," like it was Molière. Lear was pouring over that day's *New York Times* when I walked in, slowly working himself into a fury. It was one of those editions of the *Times* that consists of some meaty stories wrapped around by a Living Section supplement on, in this case, baking. The whole thing looked like the journalistic equivalent of a piroshki. Lear flipped through the paper for my benefit, angrily snapping at the pages with his fingertips. "Pastry," he said, flicking a picture of a lemon meringue pie. "Pastry . . . Fashion . . . Pastry . . . Pastry . . . Wine . . ." Finally he came to the television page. "Look at that," he yelled. "A three-inch squib on the ratings. And this is the fucking *New York Times*. Can you imagine what most other papers are like?"

Having spent much of the past two weeks with 90 TV critics who are invited to Los Angeles by the networks semi-annually, I can indeed. But I am happy to report that the still-sorry state of television criticism is improving rapidly. What must be understood is that from its inception until very recently the television beat on most newspapers was virtually a branch of show business. Some of the best reporting about the medium could be found in trade papers such as *Variety*, whose total myopia about box office profits and ratings, however, was more than a match for the entertainment industry's own. (My favorite headline in *Variety* read, "GUATEMALAN QUAKE; B. O. DOWN.") In the "consumer" press the television beat was considered a journalistic boobie prize, assigned to reporters who were content to rewrite network publicity handouts and accept "phoners" with the stars of new or fading series that need-

ed hyping. These were fill-in-the-blank interviews in which some ingénue who had done nothing since her high school pom-pom days but play a supporting part in *I Dream of Jeannie* would be asked which role she would choose if she had her druthers, Hedda Gabler or Lady Macbeth.

Twice a year, in January and June, the nation's TV critics would be flown to Los Angeles by the networks on lavish junkets. They would be put up at the best hotels, wined and dined, and shown pilots of upcoming shows. There would be side trips to Disneyland and Lion Country Safari and occasionally much more elaborate excursions: to Hawaii to see the filming of *Hawaii Five-O*, to Miami for a visit with Jackie Gleason, to Montreal for Expo 67 or to Innsbruck for the Winter Olympics. Always there would be the promotional gifts—albums, books, Mickey Mouse clock-radios, complete Western outfits "from the cast and crew of *Bonanza*" and, for several years, a beach towel from NBC with the network's new schedule printed on it (half the schedule would disappear with the first washing, went the standard joke). One year a major studio turned an entire sound stage into a giant casino, handed out free chips and at the end of the evening raffled off TV sets, stereos and cameras. It got so that by the time the junket was over, the TV critics were so laden down with free loot that one network took to giving them complimentary tote bags to carry it home in.

Of course, there was a high price to pay for all this largesse. Established TV stars would regularly insult and abuse the press during interviews. Television executives conducted press conferences as if they were talking to a bunch of sixth graders who had behaved badly during a fire drill. And network flacks reminded reporters who skipped interviews that their way to L.A. was not being paid so they could loll about kidney-shaped pools, and occasionally "disinvited" those who refused to play the game.

Given the kind of self-policing the press practiced, it didn't happen often. Gary Deeb, the tough, aggressive, sometimes even nasty TV critic for the *Chicago Tribune*, recalls the time reporters were bused out to Sammy Davis' house for an interview and an alfresco buffet of what could only be described as Beverly Hills soul food—black-eyed peas in silver tureens and the like. It was June 1973, weeks after Watergate broke and within living memory of Sammy's celebrated embrace of Nixon at the 1972 Republican convention. "Did that gesture hurt your standing among blacks?" Deeb wanted to know. Sammy was visibly taken aback by this breach of etiquette in his own backyard. Nixon was a "groovy, groovy, nice man," he started to say, when another member of the press interrupted him. "What I want to know, Sammy," he said, "is when did you decide to drop the 'Jr.' from your name?" A few minutes later Deeb tried to ask his question again. "Enough, enough on Nixon," Sammy said testily, and quickly called on another reporter, who asked him who his favorite singers were.

This was right around the time that the rules of the TV-press game began to change. Unlike the older critics, Deeb, who was then 28, had been raised on television and reacted to most of the junk on the air with the outrage of a kid who had suddenly learned that adults were injecting strychnine into his Mallomars. Other similarly disposed reporters joined the TV press corps and took Deeb's lead. Generally in their late twenties and early thirties, they frequently came from more tough-minded newspaper beats, had cut their eye teeth during Watergate and actually *wanted* to become their paper's TV critics. They saw television as a powerful cultural force and as a business story rather than as a branch of show business. Consequently, they were not much interested in asking stars about their zodiac signs, love affairs or children. In fact, they were hardly interested in talking to stars at all. They were interested in talking to network executives about program license fees, station clearances and the fine points of counterprogramming.

Not long after the Sammy Davis incident, things began to happen very quickly. Deeb wrote an article about the TV press corps for *Variety* whose title, "The Hack Pack," accurately reflected its general point of view. A few weeks later *60 Minutes* ran a segment on press junkets that prominently featured television critics along with automotive and travel reporters as the worst offenders. One scene showed Win Fanning, the TV critic for the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, as he checked into his hotel room, picked up an envelope from CBS and pulled out two crisp $10 bills to cover his cab fare from the airport. After that more and more papers began picking up the tabs for their reporters—perhaps the crucial factor in the growing professionalization of the beat.

This year the reporters formed their own organization, the Television Critics Association, and they seemed to have gained the upper hand, which is probably the way things should be at press conferences. In heated exchanges, the minority of younger, more vocal critics attempted to hold television executives responsible for the shows they put on the air—a frustrating but vigorous game that might be called "Pin the Tale on the Donkey." Not that the networks didn't try—and sometimes succeed with—their old tricks. At a breakfast meeting with ABC programmer Brandon Stoddard, the press was shown a brief clip from a new multi-part docu-drama called *Ike*. In one scene General Eisenhower meets with President Roosevelt in wartime London. Since Roosevelt had never gone to London during the war, several reporters aggressively questioned Stoddard about the historical accuracy of the rest of the show. He lamely fielded a few questions and then suddenly announced: "And now we have a very special surprise for you." In walked Carol Burnett, the star of another ABC drama next season, *Friendly Fire*. "I don't know what kind of surprise this is," she said, sensing the tension in the room. "I mean, it's not like I'm about to jump out of a prune danish." But the ploy worked, and suddenly the TV press was back to Square One. "Carol," an old-time reporter fired away, "what are your children's name and ages?" ●

Illustration by Leo Pando

Richard M. Levine is spending a year researching network television on an Alicia Patterson Foundation fellowship.

Movies/by Richard Corliss

GIVING TRASH A TOUCH OF CLASS

A week after *Jaws 2* opened, a 4,000-pound great white shark was reported off the Long Island coast. A week before *The Swarm* opened, armies of grasshoppers overran the West, and thousands of praying mantises were let loose in Central Park. It's only a matter of time before *The National Star* informs us that the Antichrist is alive and well and his name is Philippe Junot—or that he's aloft in the Soyuz space mission, waiting, one way or another, to take over the world. The proximity of these examples of lurid life and trash art may feed the chronic paranoia of any sensible person. But I suspect the reverse is true: We're more likely to laugh off the "real" horror stories because they're too close to the stories we've screamed at, and then laughed off, in the movies. "It's only a scary movie" can turn into "It's only a scare headline"—whether we're watching a TV documentary about world famine or glancing at an issue of *TV Picture Life* that announces "Elvis Is Back! Debby Boone Goes Into Shock As She Sees Him Alive!"

Getting scared in a movie theater is a form of entertainment. And when we leave the theater, the anxieties the film has provoked are left under our seats, with the popcorn bag and candy wrappers. If these anxieties were the same ones we encountered in everyday life—waking up with a hangover, enduring the ride to work, keeping our cool with the boss, being nudged out of line at the supermarket, ignoring our friends' annoying habits, watching Tom Snyder, wondering what the hell we're doing with our lives—we'd never go to a movie for escape. During the Vietnam War, we escaped from images of defoliated villages and the bombing of Haiphong Harbor, into images of earthquake-leveled L.A. and the upside-down *Poseidon*. We want our violence aestheticized, anesthetized. Toy soldiers, please, not real people who won't get up when the director yells "Cut!"

Moviemakers know this. That's why most of the recent thrillers and horror movies tantalize us with the extraordinary, the fantastic. And we know it, too. We know that there are only a few recorded cases of bathers killed by sharks; that the South American killer bees still haven't found a way to cross the Panama Canal; that the existence of an Antichrist is even more difficult to prove than the existence of Christ. But . . . what if? We enter a movie house ready to believe anything—for two hours. We provide the third dimension to a series of flat shadows; we pretend that the actors are real people, and that the events are really happening to them and, by proxy, to us. We're threatened, and we're safe. And when we let ourselves out of the big black box, we shake off a retrospective shudder and laugh at ourselves for collaborating in an enterprise as primitive as the first ghost story, or a child's nightmare.

Irwin Allen, producer of *The Poseidon Adventure*, *The Towering Inferno* and now **The Swarm**, knows this. "I always spend at least $12 million on a picture . . . hire big stars . . . have several love stories going and finish on an upbeat. Never leave an audience unhappy," he told Earl Wilson. Sure enough, *The Swarm* ends with Our Hero (handsome scientist Michael Caine) and Heroine (comely assistant Katharine Ross) hugging each other with honorable connubiality as they watch the devastation of the killer bees. The whole movie could have come out of a fifties time capsule—the kind we used to bury in our fallout shelters. No atomic explosion produces *this* threat to the Southwest, but it's still an implacable natural enemy that resists getting sprayed by the military, burned by civilians and *S.W.A.T.*-ed by the police. How mighty doth the killer bee. . . .

"Hire big stars . . ." What Irwin Allen and the producers of other expensive fantasy-thrillers don't understand is that "big stars" may add millions to the budget but not one jot of authenticity. *The Swarm* stars no fewer than five Academy Award winners (Olivia de Havilland, Ben Johnson, Jose Ferrer, Patty Duke Astin, Lee Grant) and three more Oscar nominees (Michael Caine, Henry Fonda, Richard Widmark); but they didn't win their statuettes by playing cardboard cutouts for the special-effects men. We can't help feeling uneasy at the spectacle of wealthy veteran actors compelled to take one more turn before the camera—especially Allen's.

And we can't help wondering why Allen spends so much of his money on fading stars in advanced middle age. Will they bring people into the theater? No: The story, the gimmick, the effects, the display's the thing. *The Exorcist*, *Jaws*, *Star Wars*, *Close Encounters* had no stars. Will stars make the story believable? No: Ellen Burstyn in *The Exorcist*, Roy Scheider in *Jaws*, Richard Dreyfuss in *Close Encounters* were believable, as ordinary people to whom something extraordinary was happening, precisely because they weren't stars, strapping onto their current characters the baggage of their past personas and roles. A movie star is, by definition, extraordinary. And the presence of movie stars—particularly those we associate with the Old Hollywood tradition of quality—in a disaster movie like *The Swarm* smacks too much of slumming to allow us to suspend our disbelief, and go "Eek!"

There's a moment in **Damien—Omen II** when Our Hero—the adoptive father of the kid we loved to hate in 1976's smash occult movie, *The Omen*—gets his first look at the mangled body of a close friend who, we know, has been destroyed by diabolical forces in the service of Damien. But Our Hero is played by William Holden, a classy actor and star since *Golden Boy* (1939), and his look of revulsion seems to come less from his character ("What in Hell has done this?") than from the actor's own discomfort at his predicament ("What the hell am I doing in this movie?").

Not that *Omen II* is contemptible as a catalogue of elaborate catastrophies, or as an engaging-revolting devil's tale. But Holden didn't work 40 years perfecting his movie persona—the sexy, fast-talking cynic—to prepare him for a role in which overacting is the only possible acting, and "I know it sounds crazy but it's true" is his most eloquent line. Nor, I suppose, did Leo McKern, Sylvia Sidney, Lew Ayres, Alan Arbus, Nicholas Pryor and Lee Grant go to acting school and work in classical rep companies to win roles in a movie in which they'd be (respectively) buried alive, scared to death by a raven, drowned in a frozen river, charred by lethal gas, squelched between two railroad cars, and immolated in a boiler-room explosion.

As with *The Swarm* (and, to choose at random and with contempt, *The Betsy* and *The Greek Tycoon*), this is an attempt to bring class to a project in desperate need of some bracing trashi-

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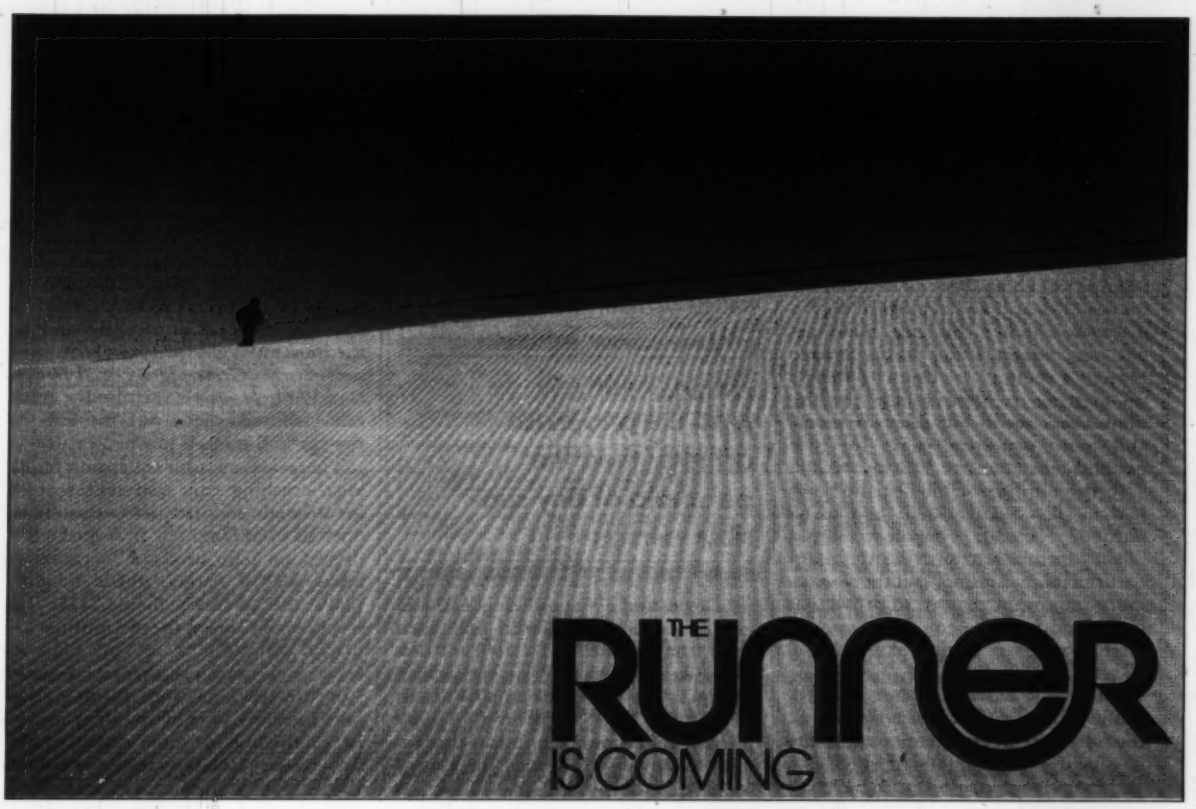

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ness. You can see the same straining for respectability in *Omen II*'s use of biblical quotes to validate the plot. It's amusing to imagine a bunch of grizzled screenwriters plumbing the Book of Revelation for plot twists; and in the original *Omen*, the sham scholarship was played so straight-faced it was funny. But *The Omen* was as much an adventure story as a horror movie: We followed Gregory Peck to cemeteries, monasteries and archaeological digs to discover whether this cute five-year-old was indeed acting at his Satanic Majesty's request. In *Omen II* there's no mystery, so there's little for the filmmakers to do but discover more, and more gruesome, ways for nice people to die.

In the old horror movies, the beast had to die—Frankenstein had to be burned, Dracula impaled, Kong felled—in order to provide the mandatory Happy Ending. But there was a more important reason: to prove that order and morality could be restored after chaos. Mr. Hyde's in his coffin, all's right with the world. Today, the mood of the movie audience is pessimistic, sardonic. Order is a figment of the bureaucratic imagination; morality is a matter of enlightened egotism—and mogul's opportunism. So the beast must live, at least for the sequel. And now that Damien has reached puberty, it's only a matter of time (and impressive box office receipts) until we see *Omen III: A Devil with the Ladies.*

There's a basic difference between a horror movie like *Omen II* and an adventure movie like **Capricorn One**. The horror film deals in shock: jolts to the nervous system, quick cuts to the homicidal murderer or the hideous corpse—the evildoer or the evil done. The adventure film deals in suspense, as the hero maneuvers out of one impossible situation and into another. It should make you feel you're taking a roller-coaster ride on rubber-band tracks . . . and suddenly the tracks end, in mid-air, over the Grand Canyon, with fighter planes attacking you on the way down, and poison-tipped spikes on the ground, and the villain chaining the beautiful blond heroine to a boulder, as a company of Angolan rebels slavers in lewd anticipation, etc. etc.

Capricorn One doesn't need a plague of locusts or a coven of devils as its evil force; it does very well with one liberal idealist (Hal Holbrook). He's an American space scientist presiding over the launching of our first manned flight to Mars—only there's not enough money to get there safely. So instead of scrapping the mission, he decides to forget about going "on location": He'll "shoot it in the studio," with the astronauts simulating the landing, the Marswalk and the return flight. The astronauts themselves (James Brolin, O.J. Simpson, Sam Waterston) finally realize there's no future for them in this particular flight plan, and become heroic.

At this point we're about halfway through the movie, which has been ambling amiably along at about the rate of James Brolin's thought processes. With its cast full of renegades from TV series (Holbrook, Brolin, Brenda Vaccaro, Denise Nicholas, David Doyle) and TV commercials (David Huddleston, James Karen and even O.J.), the first half of *Capricorn One* looks like a superior TV movie; at least it's not what the recent crop of action adventures has accustomed us to think of as a high-powered, cheap-thrill-a-minute-movie movie. And the cast of capable actors—none of whom has been honored by so much as an Oscar nomination—relaxes us. They've done this kind of thing before; they know how it works; they can use the work. Nobody's emoting or elocuting here, just movie-acting with low-keyed assurance. And writer-director Peter Hyams (himself a graduate of TV movies) controls things with equal amounts of intelligence and good humor.

The proximity of lurid life and trash art may feed the paranoia of any sensible person

Then the astronauts start running for their lives, and a struggling reporter (Elliott Gould) picks up the scent of this Big Story, and *Capricorn One* turns into almost-first-class entertainment. Nobody gets shoved in front of a steam roller, or into a Cuisinart. The dangers are more traditional: a man's mysterious disappearance, a runaway car that dives off an open drawbridge, desert encounters with rattlesnakes and scorpions, and an exciting air chase in which the pilot of the lead plane flies a pattern that seems designed to shake off, not a pursuer, but a passenger, etc., etc. The movie is woven out of story material whose consistency is halfway between newsprint and pulp; and it delivers good clean fun, proving that Old Hollywood melodramatic ingenuity can keep an audience alert without resorting to kinetoshock therapy.

That's an aesthetic distinction we're making, not a moral one. Even in the most violent Hollywood movie, nobody really gets hurt. It's all special effects and stunts. That understanding has always been in the back of the moviegoer's head. Now it can be in the front, because of a number of recent, current or upcoming pictures about stuntmen. Last year's most enjoyable summer movies were *Stunts* (an engaging exploitation movie) and the James Bond thriller, *The Spy Who Loved Me.* Now we have **Hooper**, the new Burt Reynolds movie about stuntmen on the set of a fictitious picture called *The Spy Who Laughed at Danger*—and it's the most enjoyable picture of this summer. Forget *Grease, Jaws 2* and *Heaven Can Wait; Hooper* is the one for pure, old-fashioned, let's-put-the-kids-in-the-car-and-go-to-a-movie pleasure.

There are enough collapsing buildings, crashing cars and falls from a great height to satisfy the vicarious sadism of even Zbigniew Brzezinski. But there's no pain involved, because we know it's all stunts, movie magic—that's the picture's theme. Like the truckers of *Convoy*, these stuntmen are macho without a cause; both films refer to their heroes as "the last cowboys." But the truckers were putting their lives (and the lives of any stray motorist) on the line for some vague symbolism whose meaning they were unaware of; the stuntmen are risking their necks and backs for artifice, and a feeling that, however meaningless the danger, they like doing it and they do it well. As played by Reynolds, Brian Keith, Jan-Michael Vincent and James Best, they're damned likable, too, and so is the movie. Everyone in front of and behind the camera—including the 64 stuntmen and women credited at the end—assured it.

Whether it's a stunt driver attempting a 350-foot leap over a gorge (*Hooper*), or a cracked-lipped astronaut staggering through the West Texas desert (*Capricorn One*), or a medico getting sliced in half by a falling elevator pulley (*Damien—Omen II*), or Houston, Texas, getting totaled (*The Swarm*), the carnage is realistic, but the danger isn't real, at least to an urban moviegoer. What's real? Well, in the last few weeks in New York City, a 13-year-old boy shot and killed a 16-year-old simply because the assailant thought the victim was laughing at him; a gang of bat-wielding young men pulverized some joggers in Central Park; and at the site of one grisly murder, the perpetrator left this note: "The Ax Man—2 Down, 9 To Go." Horror-movie Armageddons can seem remote when we sit at home, alone, screening real-life horrors in our heads, and knowing that we can't laugh it off as the brutal artistry of moviemakers. It's scary to think that a theater showing *The Swarm* or *Omen II* may be the safest place in town. ●

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Music/by Alan Platt

DYLAN'S HOUR OF NEED

The Dylan Renaissance continues its strange momentum with the release of *Street-Legal*, an album which already promises to be his most commercially successful ever. And following the example of *Renaldo and Clara*, the recent four-hour film "autobiography" that scandalized all but his staunchest admirers, it looks to be one of his most controversial.

What many critics saw as an exercise in vanity and megalomania in the movie translates itself on record into a series of the most aggressive and ill-tempered *love* songs that even the unsentimental Dylan ever seemed capable of putting out. They are also brilliant, which is more to the point.

The fact that Dylan's odd musical ear is now becoming more acceptable to the casual listener only partly explains the reason for the new surge of interest. He is also a major contemporary poet of the self, and, at a time when narcissism has ceased to be a dirty word and has become the prevailing obsession, his is again the most conspicuous and eloquent voice.

The culture of rock also finds itself limping away from a period of doomed optimism, rediscovering, perhaps, that the human condition is a much darker and funnier mess than the past decade of ghastly *positive thinking* and instant karma would have had us believe. The times are ripe for the bitter and witty realism of a Dylan. Again it would seem the world is turning to the spinner of riddles, not so much to find any answers but to puzzle through that exquisite and unfathomable imagery, to see how the lad is getting on with that flawed masterpiece, himself. A close listen to *Street-Legal* reveals that Himself is not doing too well. In fact, Himself is in big trouble.

The entire album, with the exception of the opening track, is about desperation and lost love. It is an extraordinarily sustained cry from some pit of misery, and tempts one, at first, into a very simplistic reading of the songs; it sounds like Dylan's first open lament. But time and sorrow have not made his luminous obscurity any more penetrable; and his megalomaniacal posture, the alienating factor in his movie,

is such that we can no more easily empathize with it than we can unravel that compulsive symbolism that fits image into image into image like Chinese banana skins.

As such, the album exerts a strange, repugnant magnetism, a confusion of venom and pain. While dismaying those among us who would have our heroes react to life's regular kicks in the groin with a show of discreet nobility, it nevertheless conveys the fierce honesty that is seldom presented for popular consumption, and *never* in rock music. The complexities of loss and despair are not pretty, nor is Dylan a sweet-natured boy. The overall feel of the songs leaves no doubt that he is reacting to his remorse by trying to kick his way out of it. Apart from the rather rhapsodic "Where Are You Tonight?", the most sympathetic track, (and the one which is getting most of the current airplay), he expresses his sadness more in anger than in pain. Dylan's appeal to the lost object of his affections is otherwise aimed right at her sense of guilt and fear, not her pity. Dylan has never found it in him to sound pitiful, and melancholy is virtually nonexistent here.

It seems that the simple cry from the heart in "Sara," on *Desire* was a once only letting-down of all Dylan's defenses, poetic and emotional. *Street-Legal* puts back all the barriers of symbolism and cynicism.

"Sara" presented the extraordinary phenomenon of Dylan openly begging his wife, by name, not to leave him. She left him. Whatever direct effect this has had on his songs, there is no doubt that something catastrophic has happened to that rather cool fascination with which he has traditionally viewed the comic fog out here on the street. Since the release of *Desire*, which still contained the usual mixture of fable, love song and jaundiced world-view, the realities of anguish have taken their toll.

Popular opinion would have it that *Street-Legal* is entirely about Sara, and is Dylan's attempt to get her back. But the man's life is not some oblique soap opera in glorious Crypto-Scope. Nor is it sliding into that sentimental swamp of cliché-ridden misery that we can all relate to by merely discovering that the boy had a heart to break in the first place. As he says in "Where Are You Tonight?", his life is "A book that no one can write," and, whatever we would like to assume, "The truth was obscure, too profound and too pure/ To live it you have to explode."

One would do better to simply hear the album as a brilliant abstraction on the theme of Loss, thereby letting it transcend any fascination one might feel as to its actual cause. The poetry of pain will always outlive the truth of any specific situation that produced it. As it happens, Dylan's suspended state of Grace has inspired his best piece of writing since *Blonde On Blonde*.

Musically, the album is a little off-putting at first listening. Only three tracks, "Where Are You Tonight?", "Senor" and "Changing of The Guard" instantly lift one into the drift of their rhythms and at the same time convey some sense of content by the texture of their arrangements. Elsewhere, the power and charge of the lyrics is often all but buried in a hodgepodge of styles, some of them quite ugly and generally overburdened by the three-woman soul/gospel chorus that seems to be Dylan's new fixation, after his similar, but exquisite, flirtation with the violin on *Desire*. While there is no doubt that, on the more freewheeling tracks, the backup voices account for much of the drive, they more often simply get in the way of the singer, as they echo and repeat his phrases like the most annoying excesses of Elvis' Jordanaires.

But the imagery of the lyrics is generally so dense that it requires constant replaying to *get* it all, by which time the offensiveness of the jarring structures disappears. It's a triumph of mind over rock prejudice.

It had begun to seem like the days of actually looking forward to a new Dylan album were long gone. There *was* a time in the early sixties, during the puberty of rock, when a new Dylan release would hit the racks like a stop-press from the Ark of the Covenant. Every pimply hipster who needed a fix

Photograph by Paul Canty/Retna

on the prevailing *nuance*, along with those fools among us who thought we already had one, dived as one onto the latest scrap of darkness from our crazed oracle, as if our lives depended on it. And in many ways, they did depend on it for much of their inspiration. It seems amusing now to look back on a time when Dylan was revered like some kind of McLuhanish global guru, dispensing instant take-out existentialism. But the truth of the matter is that he had us like a bunch of junkies at needle-time. We'd rush out and buy our records, and practically hold *seminars* on the phone at the strangest hours, puzzling over phrases and images that were quietly driving us crazy and, in the process, becoming part of our collective vocabulary.

His songs were more than a reflection of the current obsessions; they even helped *create* a few. A blossoming generation of articulate pranksters and stoned cynics chose for their illumination these images and attitudes, which were as cryptic and indecipherable as the feelings they were trying to express. Why Dylan chose to abdicate that unspoken leadership and bury himself in a string of country-style forays into the American mainstream is the subject of endless speculation.

But the period when Dylan was eclipsed, the decade after *Blonde On Blonde*, which saw simple, great rock and roll as more relevant to the collective psyche than his dark secrets, is grinding to a halt in a banal sludge of smooth, gutless rock Muzak and moronic disco. Once more, the symbolist juices are beginning to flow.

If Dylan has accommodated his style a little to the ingrained needs of a generation raised on rock, then a hungry rock audience has itself turned around to meet Dylan more than halfway. Once again, Dylan is right there with his rough-edged *verité* style of production, in the perfect position to give his estranged admirers another shot of much-needed reality. That it took a lot of misery on his part to hit the vein once more is perhaps ironic, but contentment has ever been the enemy of creativity. The phenomenon of Dylan Agonistes, stuck outside of Love with the Memphis Blues again, may not be the happiest of reasons for a triumphant return; but with a series of sell-out tours behind him, and reports of high-energy performances at his recent London concerts, it seems that the bard is back. In a recent interview, Dylan said that an artist could have no higher ambition than to inspire. If the hard-core honesty of *Street-Legal*, an act of faith in himself and in the power of public therapy, manages to lift him out of the remorse that created the album, then he will have succeeded. ●

RECORDS

by Jim Miller

On first listen, it is hard to believe that **Darkness on the Edge of Town** (Columbia), Bruce Springsteen's first album in almost three years, is as bad as it is. Never has a rock performer been overwhelmed so suddenly by so much media attention, only to be forced from view, preoccupied with litigation, obsessed with creating an album that would make inflated critical claims credible.

In a certain sense, I suppose that Springsteen has succeeded. *Darkness* has all the earmarks of a "mature statement from a major voice." His new songs use a lean instrumentation, while his new lyrics add a tragic tint to his melodramatic romanticism. The album even opens on a reassuring note with "Badlands," a compact rerun of patented Springsteen riffs.

But by compressing all his favorite themes of frustration and hope, repression and rebellion, into one emblematic anthem like "Badlands," Springsteen unwittingly illuminates the strained seriousness and failure of imagination that mars the rest of *Darkness on the Edge of Town*.

In place of the effortless grace that distinguishes great rock and roll, the listener is subjected to plodding band tracks, mush-mouthed vocals and an aura of hyped-up hysteria all the more depressing given the utter predictability of all the moves. On side one, there are songs about cars, streets and darkness; on side two, there are more songs about cars, streets and darkness. Struggling to evoke an automotive outlaw, Springsteen sounds like a constipated cowboy drowning in oatmeal.

Born to Run had its flaws, but at least it made Springsteen sound spontaneously impassioned. His new album is not "mature"; it's embalmed. Compare a new song like "Streets of Fire" to an old one like "Rosalita," and the difference is audible. Despite a botched tempo and dropped notes galore, "Rosalita" is fresh, unruly, alive. "Streets of Fire" is mummy music.

If it breaks the spell of high expectations imprisoning him, this debacle may yet enable Springsteen to give himself more of the psychological space he obviously needs to create music that sounds genuinely felt rather than hopelessly contrived. Until then, he will remain a casualty of media canonization, cut loose from the roots that once gave his music immediacy, authority and an unforced importance.

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OH, CURSES! THE UTILITY OF ABUSE

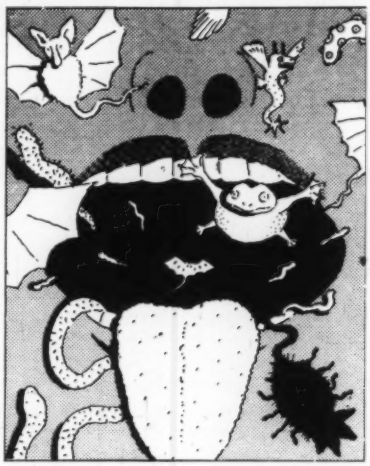
Bad Mouth: Fugitive Papers on the Dark Side
by Robert M. Adams.
University of California Press/
A Quantum Book
(151 pp., paperback, $2.65).

Coprolalia is an odd disease, symptoms known for centuries, cause still a riddle. The victim compulsively utters oaths of the vilest sort, sometimes demonic, more often scatological. To cure this possession the exorcist was, and sometimes still is, sent for; science has recently had luck with cures, and neurologists believe that a reservoir of nightwords is held in a particular region of the brain, very old indeed on the evolutionary ladder.

Now and again a newsmagazine prints a report of someone young, female, innocent or otherwise inappropriate who curses excrementally, terrifyingly. The victim is regarded as a mouthpiece, an amplifying instrument for the nightside of things; and the impersonality of the case is frightening, like a nonsense language that uses our words, but not our syntax or agreed sense of what words mean and do.

Robert Adams' six essays are about the dirt people do to one another and to themselves, in literature as in life: slander, insult, the public lie, obscenity, a preoccupation with the ugly. The essays were not composed to hang together, and they don't; but they speak to a single question, the utility of the unspeakable.

It is a commonplace for the genteel (not all of them prigs or censors) to identify the use of nightwords with poverty of imagination. It is also common to cite in contrary evidence the drill sergeant capable of making whole paragraphs from elaborations of the single root-word *fuck*. In fact, the language of obscenity, like all language, plays by very strict rules—from the drill sergeant's compression to Rabelais' expansion. It is not farfetched to observe in the language of outrage and insult a tendency toward forms not unlike the tendency of verse to take on the condition of *haiku* or Joycean riverrun.



In his essay "Invective and Insult," Adams writes that "surely the most-used words of insult in contemporary America are 'bastard' and 'son of a bitch,' neither of which is more than remotely symbolic in its application." I agree that *bastard* and *son of a bitch* are abstract, which is why they are almost invariably modified, made precise. I once heard a taxi driver call my father a "silly-looking son of a bitch"; it was *silly-looking* that stung.

Far from displaying poverty of imagination, the language of extreme imprecation has traditionally provided the occasion for set pieces of invention. Coprolalia is so distressing because it is unfelt and unformed, unpremeditated, an abuse of the gift of speech, a peek at the chaos that was, and might be. Nightwords in form are like a jazz musicians' improvisations. Adams offers Kent's speech in *King Lear* as an example of insult. The Steward has crossed Kent, who explodes, replying to the Steward's question "What dost thou know me for?" with a run of invective:

"A knave, a rascal, an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-stocking knave; a lily-livered, action-taking knave; a whoreson, glass-gazing, super-serviceable, finical rogue; a one-trunk inheriting slave; one that wouldst be a bawd in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch; one whom I will beat into clamorous whining if thou deniest the least syllable of thy addition."

Kent explodes, in Adams' view, because his "rage with this gross pragmatical pig of a world o'erflows all measure—he must unpack his heart with words." Adams has the priorities wrong: Here is wordplay in a pure form, a riff. In *King Lear,* Kent speaks in both verse and prose; prose is his improvisational mode, and Shakespeare's, and the long runs of abuse spoken by Iago, Thersites, Timon and Falstaff do not in any way invoke chaos. They invigorate, lighten, celebrate the luck of words. The translators of Rabelais (Urquhart and Motteux), achieved one of the great solos in English in their rendering of the quarrel between the cake-bakers and grape-growers, the former, in a single sentence, calling the latter: prattling gabblers, licorous gluttons, freckled bittors, mangy rascals, shite-a-bed scoundrels, drunken roysterers, sly knaves, drowsy loiterers, slapsauce fellows, slubberdegullion druggles, lubbardly louts, cozening foxes, ruffian rogues, paultry customers, sycophant-varlets, drawlatch hoydens, flouting milksops, jeering companions, staring clowns, forlorn snakes, ninny lobcocks, scurvy sneaksbies, fondling fops, base loons, saucy coxcombs, idle lusks, scoffing braggards, noddy meacocks, blockish grutnols, doddi-pol joltheads, jobbernol goose-caps, foolish loggerheads, flutch calf-lollies, grouthead gnat-snappers, lob-dotterels, gaping changelings, codshead loobies, woodcock slangams, ninnie-hammer fly-catchers. noddiepeak simpletons, turdy-gut shitten shepherds, and other such like defamatory epithets. Here calculated language does drift close to the edge of rant, of coprolalia; it fences with senselessness but does not yield to it. (The reader is mesmerized, wishes to linger rather than escape, begins to hope it will never end.)

There is a famous passage in the *Sot-Weed Factor* wherein an insult to a hooker provokes six pages of variants on the word *whore* ("mattressback ... narycherry ... prickpocket ..."). When Lenny Bruce worked under the conventions of bop and Catskills *spritz* he was refreshing the language. But when he urged the case for his social utility, he put people to sleep. The art is all, and good art *is* a scourge, whether the particular form is Henry Miller's or Céline's, Swift's or Barth's.

Adams comes at the matter of nightwords from a different angle. His arguments meander and are easily seduced into taking a load off their feet

Illustration by Steven Guarnaccia

for a while. But sooner or later Adams returns to his central question: the modern preoccupation with filth. Only his essay "The New Arts of Political Lying" ignores nightwords and nightsoil; but it too comes to a conclusion central to his thesis, that "a significant function of language" is "to mislead and distract attention," like a magician's patter during a trick, or Muhammad Ali's patter before a bout.

Adams speaks of the unkept campaign promise as a "'*dolus bonus*', a proper fraud.... It is not a perversion of human nature, but human nature itself; we all make allowances for it." I'm not certain he doesn't make an important point here, that there are occasions—in campaign oratory, hellfire sermons, protracted runs of abuse—when the form rather than the matter is meant to attract and hold attention. The other night I heard several young men explain on television why they mugged their neighbors, and a pair of images swam through their language—rats crawling out of their toilets, cockroaches out of their food. The latter is from the world of possibility, the former is from the world of bad dream, but the purpose of both was rhetorical, almost musical.

Adams has another notion: "As they approach or try to recover from crises of action, societies like individuals seem to need superficial, simplistic philosophies which combine a lot of language with very few ideas.... In our own day, it's a particular function of language to shield us as best it can from the intolerable glare of Nothing and Nonbeing." But much of this book uses language as diversion or shield, suggesting a motivational center, a philosophy of scatology. It has no skeleton.

Too often its specifics are fuzzy, or wrong. Adams says that the locution *bad mouth* is a "relatively new term." It has been around at least a quarter century; we used it in the fifties in our lily-white school, and used it in several forms, *to bad mouth* someone, *to put the bad mouth on* someone. Adams says *bad mouth* is rarely passive: "you can't easily *be* bad-mouthed..." Really?

He offers this astounding declarative sentence: "Creative artists have a way of not living in areas of heavy pollution." But he follows this with something worth hearing: that contemporary art's preoccupation with nightwords, nightsoil and garbage "amounts to ideology rather than lived belief," is fashionable rather than felt. I believe this. But I believe also there is a distinction between the disgust imposed langorously like a dandy's attire on the Contemporary Vision, and the energy that can drive the language of insult and abuse. ●

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Choking on the Pill/by Mopsy Strange Kennedy

FINAL TRIBUTE

I vividly remember the day in 1961 when a friend—who had all manner of unidentified flying boyfriends to fend off contraceptively—stood in my kitchen, snapped her noisy plastic birth control pill counter to "Monday," and said defiantly: "I've gone chemical." Those were the Helen Gurley Brown years, when nearly half the population was young and fertile, and when sexual freedom—or even arrogant display—was practically required. At the time, Pilling-It sounded as futuristic as test-tube babies and clones sound today, probably because of the neon-chilly distance it put between the intention and the performance, the performance and the outcome. Yet the Pill's career was meteoric—raffish, even. Its name eclipsed the name of all other pills that the sick and the old took lifesavingly.

Birth control pills went on the market in 1960. By 1965 or so, to eschew the Pill marked one as a not-very-daring person, one still willing to submit to that topical, palpable raincoat—the condom—or to the less-effective diaphragm, which brought one into unerotic contact with the workaday world of the reproductive apparatus. The Pill, on the other hand, was from Outer Space, and it made possible an eerie disconnection from our bodies (not yet defined as ourselves). But the Pill also seemed to imply a transcendence of intent that leapt o'er the head of any given partner. One was On The Pill in an anticipatory way, in general; the insertion of a diaphragm had someone's name on it, as it were, because it was associated with the particular person and occasion, and only an oaf would "wear" it all day long *in case*. Still, promiscuity and fidelity were served equally well by the Pill. It had possibilities for bravado and pathos; the ever-ready and ever-requited could resemble those who were prepared, yet bereft of opportunity.

People said the Pill was impersonal, but this no one could dispute: It was wonderfully effective, about 99 percent so. In those days its virtual infallibility defined it as *safe*, if only in the vernacular and immediate sense of the word. Compared with diaphragm roulette, it brought peace of mind and so enhanced the joy of sex. Which also meant it afforded sleuthless leaping from partner to partner with no "evidence" (in hardware terms) to account for. And unlike the diaphragm, which persisted messily in the body for eight hours after the Act (often forbidding further Acts for fear of dislodging its slaughtered freight), the Pill invited swift repetition.

The Pill shackled the mad sea of menstruation to its intended 28-day schedule, producing a chic, streamlined period. *And* inflated breasts—good news for those of us who had long since realized that the Befores and Afters in the famous bust development ads were only photos, and that hope didn't lie thataway.

With so much to recommend it, there had to be a snake in the butter somewhere. Indeed. When the possibilities of pregnancy as a consequence of sex diminished, consequences found other fields to bivouac on. A new menstrual style emerged: The Pillfat Blues, a distinctive, bloaty, grouchy state of body that resembled premenstrual tension and that went on and on and on. It often amounted to depression, even suicidal depression, which, as Pill-antagonist Barbara Seaman pointed out in her book *The Doctors' Case Against the Pill*, was a good argument against it for many women. Cancer of the uterus cropped up as a grisly side-effect of the "sequential" version of the Pill, causing it to be removed from the market. But the most terrifying news of all was that the Pill—which in its heyday accounted for one third of all contraceptives sold—was becoming linked with those unfrisky, un-young complaints: heart attacks and blood clots. Clots!—baleful suitcases traveling trapped in the blood. Nixon stuff. So we learned that even a woman under 30 who took the Pill and smoked had a 6–11 times greater chance of getting a clot than did a non-user. And that the threat of a heart attack was 2.7 times greater for a Pill-taker between 30 and 40.

Nowadays doctors and pharmacists are required to enclose a very sober and detailed brochure in every Pill package. One frightening piece of information in this brochure is the graph showing women between 40 and 44 who both smoke and use the Pill. That bar shoots up into the danger area like a veritable World Trade Center tower, dwarfing the other ranch-type bars. But more important, with the Pill only a young girl of 18, who can really say what the long-term effects of throwing synthetics at one's ovaries might be. And so, no matter how documented and controlled these dangers are, it seems that sex is becoming associated with that other Woody Allen concern: Death.

The pill is still around. And even though its use has fallen off somewhat in the past few years, the statistics are not impressive (a drop of 1.2 percent between 1973 and 1975, for example). But its carefree youth has passed. At Planned Parenthood they say that women looking for contraception demonstrate more knowledge, and consequently more wariness, than they have in the past. Many women now take the mini-pill (which contains only progestin) but its effectiveness is a less liberating 97 percent—which goes to show you can't have everything.

Can we conclude from all this that moral boundaries will always find new and disturbing ways to draw themselves around experience, adventure, freedom? That Advantage A will eventually darken over into Peril B? That first you polka and then you pay?

It looks ominously that way. ●

Sculpture by Kathy Jeffers; photograph by John E. Barrett

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